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* *

THE LIFE AND ODES OF GHALIB

Being a short account of the life of Mirza Ghalib,
the great Moghul poet of Delhi, and selected
translations from his Urdu Diwan

by

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LAHORE

URDU ACADEMY

LOHARI SATE

LAHORE

1941

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P R E F A C E

TO-DAY when the world forces are furiously working to bring about a closer understanding between the various peoples of the globe, the study of the progress of human thought and literature is indeed as instructive as it is fascinating. Apart from its inestimable value as the great heritage of the ancestors of contemporary man, all that man has thought and conceived is valuable data in the various domains of humanistic sciences. In the realm of literature, the books of poetry afford the best opportunity for a student of humanism—to study human nature and the behaviour of the human spirit.

While it is true that there has been a genuine effort on the part of international writers to build up a world literature in the real sense, it must be regretfully said that most of the Eastern men of letters have not found their right place in world literature, merely because their works have not been presented to the western people. The conspicuous

lack of representation of the East and all that is great and glorious pertaining to it has been keenly felt by students of international thought and much is desired to be done in this direction. With the exception of Omar Khayyam and a few others, a great many poets of real merit have remained hidden from the eyes of the world—flowers that blossomed only to blush unseen.

Mirza Asad Ullah Khan Ghalib, of Delhi, whose name needs no introduction to the Indian student was India's premier Urdu and Persian poet during the regime of the last Moghul Emperor. During his lifetime, the poet was fairly popular but real appreciation of his verse, on which alone can rest the fame of a poet, came a few decades after his death. With the marked progress of education in the current century, Ghalib has been widely read and the criticism evoked by his works has been both fair and unfair. He has been particularly appreciated for the humanistic touch of his verse, although it must be said that the poet has a pessimistic view on life and his verse is hardly helpful in the reshaping of things, specially when the people

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of India are thinking of revaluation and reconstruction. But as far as his art—power of communication, depth of vision, chaste expression, with his peculiar outlook on life—is concerned, the poet raised a pinnacle of perfection which is sure to remain an object of attraction for a long time to come.

With all the popularity of his verse, particularly of his Urdu *Ghazals*, the poet's works have not been so far introduced to the West and his verse is inaccessible to the English reader. I have, therefore, made a modest attempt to present in the following pages, a brief sketch of the poet's life with selected translations of his Urdu *Ghazals* which, it is hoped, will prove a useful introduction to the great poet's life and work. While writing the poet's life, I have constantly held in view the necessity of describing the events of his life in chronological order which, I hope, will add to the value of his work,

LAHORE,

Winter, 1940

A. ANWAR BEG

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

By John Clive Roome

MR. ABDULLA ANWAR BEG needs no introduction, but he has, for reasons best known to himself, asked me to write an introduction to his book *The Life and Odes of Ghalib*. I know Urdu only as a journalist who has spent many years of his life in India may be expected to know it, not as a scholar. Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg has made a serious study of Urdu, and not only of Urdu but also of Persian and Turkish, as this book that he has written dealing with a period in the history of Urdu when it was with India on the threshold of great political changes eloquently bears witness. The fact that Ghalib was poet laureate in the Court of the last of the Moghuls alone makes his poems of interest to the philologist studying the developments that have taken place in Urdu as a language.

In the Urdu poems of Ghalib we find Urdu as it was after about 800 years of its evolution as a dialect distinct from Prakrit. Those who trace the beginnings of Urdu from the day

when it acquired its Turkish name forget the impact of Persian words on Prakrit when the stream of Muslim invaders began to flow into India. The Urdu of the days of Ghalib marked the culmination of the influence of Persian in its vocabulary, especially in verse, which then monopolised the literature in the language. The Urdu of the man in the street and the Urdu of prose was different from the Urdu of Ghalib, the poet, and the Urdu of Ghalib reflected the political change through which India was then passing.

Persian was the language of the Courts in India in Ghalib's day, and -it remained the language of the Courts for many years after the death of Ghalib, but with the approaching end of the Moghul Empire Persian in India was becoming stereotyped as an official language.

In spite of the fact that Ghalib also employed Persian to express his poetic thoughts, in his Urdu poems he avoided the ornate Persian style of his day and even many Persian words. It was the simplicity of his style that was the secret of his success as a poet after his death. It was his sincerity which placed him in a niche of his own as an Urdu poet.

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Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg has for the first time translated into English many of the most characteristic Urdu odes of Ghalib, and his short life sketch of the poet gives the reader an insight into the springs of the poet's mind.

Ghalib lived in times of stress and he did not escape the effects of the upheaval caused by the passing of the last of the Moghuls from Delhi to the obscurity of life as a political exile in Burma. He saw the curtain rung down on the Great Moghul Empire, and the entire fabric of the social order in Delhi undergo a drastic change. The tragedy of the Moghul Empire was the crowning tragedy of the poet's life.

In Ghalib's Urdu odes we see the spirit of the times at work. In his Persian poems also, Ghalib foreshadowed the departure from the tradition of the past which sacrificed almost everything to form. Ghalib, more than even Rafi-uis-Sauda or Arzu, deserves to be called the father of Urdu poetry. He established a new tradition in Urdu literature which is still an active force. The simplicity and directness which Ghalib imparted to Urdu poetry grew in effectiveness in the works of his pupil, Hali, and Ghalib may justly claim to have inspired Iqbal.

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After Ghalib, Urdu only needed the evolution of a literary tradition in prose to raise it to the dignity of a language capable of becoming the mirror of thought. To the British administrators of India is due the credit of furthering the cause of Urdu prose. But for the fact that British military officers needed text-books in Urdu to unravel its mysteries as a language, the College in Fort William would probably not have undertaken to have works written in Urdu prose. In Hyderabad, the work of the College in Fort William is being carried a stage further, and Urdu may now be said to be passing through a process of modernisation.

Born as are all languages as a result of the commingling of different currents of thought, Urdu appears to have retained for a longer time than perhaps any other language the distinction between written and spoken words. Indeed, Urdu spent a very long period of apprenticeship as a language of the camp or market-place. Many before Ghalib had explored the literary possibilities of Urdu, but even the Brahman Nusrati in his *Gulshan-i-hhq*, writing in the days of Ali Adil Shah in Bijapur, could not help drawing freely upon

the resources of Persian to increase the powers of expression of Urdu. It was Ghalib who first attempted to give Urdu its place among the languages of the world independent of the many other languages which had gone to enrich its vocabulary.

Ghalib little knew when he was enunciating his principles of Urdu composition that whatever else the political changes that he was witnessing in Delhi and, with it, in India may bring in their train, Urdu was, as a result of these changes, destined to acquire a new dignity. Not many years after the death of Ghalib, Urdu took the place of Persian as the language of the Courts.

In Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg's biography of Ghalib, we get a glimpse of the forces which moulded the life of the poet. Like many poets everywhere in the world, Ghalib was an apt pupil, as he says, in "the school of the grief of the heart." This gives his poetic thought its incisiveness. This also makes him impatient of the orgy of imagery which, in his day, was regarded as the highest form of poetic expression. Ghalib finds it difficult to escape altogether from the tyranny of convention but

there is in, his; odes an economy of far-fetched similes and other figures of speech, as compared with the works of other poets using Urdu as the vehicle of expression who came before him, which is surprising. Ghalib's "Ode to Spring" which Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg has included among the odes he has translated, is, perhaps, the first ode in Urdu in which the poet has not made the spring an occasion for indulging in such an extravagance of language that its wonder has made one forget the spring itself. Ghalib has made simple words in his ode to spring conjure up the miracle of spring. In Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg's selection of Ghalib's odes, the translation of the "Ode to Spring," accurate as it is, yet reveals the limitations of a translation in conveying the thoughts of a poet from the language he has employed into another. The sun and moon, for instance, in Ghalib's ode (page 163) are not ordinary spectators of the coming of spring; they are *tamashai* with the sense of wonderment and awe of spectators witnessing the great drama of the advent of spring. Ghalib, again, calls upon mankind, dwellers upon the mound of dust of the earth, to learn not only the secret of the

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" world-adorning," of spring but also of humility. In describing how the magic touch of spring brings the earth " face to face with the dome of the jewelled sky, " the poet reveals far more than the transformation of the dust of the earth into a vault rivalling the one of "the jewelled sky." It is the miracle of the transmutation of the dust which the poet reveals. It is to see this miracle of " the grass and the flower "—the lifeless dust changed into verdure throbbing with the promise of life and "jewelled " with flowers—that " the eye of the narcissus has been given sight.⁵⁵

Now that Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg has begun with Iqbal and Ghalib to introduce them to those who cannot read their works in the original, I trust he will continue with the translation into English of the works of other poets of India who employed Urdu as the vehicle of their thoughts. He is well qualified to act as the interpreter of these poets. Besides English, Irani and Arabic, he also knows French and German. Within about four years of leaving college, he has already two very creditable books, *Since Our Fall* and *Tamir-i-Nau*, to his credit, and even if his life as a lawyer

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practising in the Lahore High Court makes extraordinary demands on his time, all those who have read his critical appreciation of Iqbal as a poet, and those who now read his *Life and Odes of Ghalib* would like to see him continue to serve the cause of Oriental literature.

The onslaught to which Urdu has been subjected, as I think unreasonably, by those who champion the cause of Hindi makes it necessary to place both Urdu and Hindi in their right perspective as languages of India. "Basically, Urdu and Hindi are not different languages. They have acquired their distinctive characteristics as a result of the changes through which India has passed during a period of some 800 years. The literature in Urdu and Hindi is the heritage of all those who live in India as it is also of others outside India, and it is impossible to advance the cause of either of these languages by attempts to hinder the development of the other.

Mr. Abdulla Anwar Beg has only to reveal the hidden treasures of Urdu literature to those who now dispute the claim of Urdu as the *lingua franca* of Northern India at least, if not of India, to make them realise the injury they

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would inflict upon India by crippling the powers of Urdu as the vehicle of thought. If only the broad-mindedness of Ghalib were the norm of thought in India, the conflict between Urdu and Hindi as the other sectional differences which now make life intolerable would become things of the past.

" Faithfulness with the condition of stability is
the root of faith ;

" If the Brahman breathes his last in the idol-
house, O bury him in the Kaaba!"
says Ghalib (page 137), and for those who think with him there could not be any conflict between Urdu and Hindi for pride of place among the languages of India.

However, those who think that they can relegate Urdu to the limbo of forgotten dialects are wasting their time. The works of poets, like Ghalib, cannot be erased from the pages of life any more than events of history. Languages only die when they cease to derive their sustenance from the stream of life, and yet they do not die because of the influence they have exerted in moulding life when they were pulsating with vitality. Nor can languages be created at will or revived by artificial respira-

tion. Urdu would cease to be a language and Ghalib would be forgotten only when Urdu has lost the power to grow. Urdu shows no signs of having reached a static stage. If Ghalib revealed an unsuspected virility in Urdu, it is to-day revealing an adaptability to the changing circumstances of life which is surprising, and there is historical aptness in the fact that Urdu is undergoing a process of development in the Deccan where it first took wing in the realm of literature.

Clive Roomer

SHALIMAR "
LAHORE
March 17, 1941

TO

**MY YOUNGER DAYS
AND DREAMS**

PART I

LIFE OF GHALIB

INTRODUCTORY

ON DECEMBER 27, 1797 (the 8th night of Rajab, 1212 A.H.), in the historic city of Akbarabad (Agra) where the celestial Taj Mahal stands as a lasting monument to Moghul glory and art, was born one of India's greatest poetical geniuses—Mirza Ghalib, who during the autumnal days of the Moghul Empire chanted like a "hundred-throated" nightingale the sweetest and saddest love songs ever sung by an Indian lyricist. While the Taj has been shining, since the days of Shah Jahan as a jewel of perfection in the realm of art and has attracted hosts of visitors from all corners of the world, the works of Mirza Ghalib constitute a marvellous achievement in the domain of poetry both Urdu and Persian and have been widely appreciated for the poet's wonderful expression, chaste style and flights of imagination.

Rightly, Ghalib has been regarded as one of the greatest exponents in the art of writing *Ghazals* and the lustre of his verse profusely

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illuminates the reader's-vision and heart in the chamber of love, with its Oriental associates—the Cup, the Carafe and the Saki. The Taj was raised to the memory of the Emperor Shah Jahan's royal consort at a time when the sun of the Moghul glory had risen to its zenith. Those were different days—the Moghul spirit was alive; the builders of the Taj could be created, that is to say, Art had its patrons. Mirza Ghalib; as a poet, appeared in a fast-disintegrating society when the dramatic end of the Moghul Empire had drawn nigh. A great political chaos had overtaken the Moghuls and arts and learning were on the wane. In such circumstances, the advent of Ghalib is a surprising phenomenon. Of course, it was the old Moghul spirit that found expression in one of its many phases—Art, keeping the poet's heart throbbing at a time when the Moghul was facing a political collapse. The glory of the Moghul, however, shall shine for all time—the Taj will be looked upon as Art personified, and Ghalib as a great artist and his poetry as the shrine of songs that represents pathos, love and beauty.

CHAPTER I
A TURKISH FAMILY

NAJM-UD-DAULA Dabir-ul-Mulk Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib, to give him his full name, was a Turk (Aibak) by race. He traced his descent from the House of Turan, son of Faridun and has more than once proudly referred in his works to his high connections with the great Turkish rulers, such as Pashang, Sanjar and others :—

غالب از خاک پاک تورانیم
لاجرم در نسب فرّه مندیم
ایبکیم از جماعت اتراک
در تمامی زماه ده چندیم

Ghalib ! We are from the sacred dust of Turan,
Doubtless, we are glorious in dynastic origin ;
We are Aibaks, from amongst the class of Turks,
In fullness, we are ten times superior to the
moon.

ساقی چو من پشنگی و افرا سیاییم
دانم که اصل گوهرم از دودهٔ جم است

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O Saki! As I belong to the line of Pashang
and Afrasiyab,
You know that my origin is from the House of
Jamshid;
Give me now the wine which is the legacy of
Jamshid
And then will pass to me Paradise, which is the
legacy of Adam.

According to Ghalib himself, as he wrote in a letter, his grandfather had migrated from Transoxiana to India during the reign of Shah Alam (this does not seem to be correct, it was perhaps during the time of Muhammad Shah) In those days, the Delhi Sultanate was unstable. Being in the service of Shah Alam with fifty horses, a Pargana was made over to him to meet his personal expenses. In another letter, the poet while relating the history of his forefathers says that his ancestors had a close relationship with the Seljuk Turks, who raised a standard of high military leadership during the Seljuk reign. But with the march of time their glory vanished and the spirit of adventure

and depredation took them from place to place in search of Fortune. Among them Sultanzada Tarsam Khan, from whom Ghalib claimed his direct descent, had settled in Samarkand* Ghalib's grandfather, being not on good terms with his father emigrated to India and attached himself to Nawab Muin-ul-Mulk in Lahore, but when "the carpet of Muin-ul-Mulk's affairs was rolled up," he came to Delhi and took service under Zulfiqar-ud-Daula Mirza Najaf Khan Bahadur. Abdullah Beg Khan, father of Ghalib, was born in Delhi.

Ghalib's grandfather still spoke Turkish and of his sons, the names of only two are known : Mirza Abdullah Beg Khan (father of Ghalib) and Mirza Nasrullah Beg Khan. After the death of their father, the two brothers took to their ancestral profession, military service. Abdullah Beg Khan moved to Lucknow and was sometime in the service of Asaf-ud-Daulah. A short time after, he made his way to Hyderabad and entered the service of Nizam Ali Khan with a troop of three hundred horsemen. He stayed there for many years, but later he lost his commission. In confusion and

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disappointment, he set his face towards Alwar and served under Raja Bakhtawar Singh. He was killed in a conflict with a rebel Zamindar at Rajgarh and was buried there. The incident took place probably in 1802 when Ghalib was only five years of age. Abdullah Beg Khan left two sons—Asadullah Khan Ghalib and Yusuf Khan; the latter was two years younger than Ghalib; there is mention of a sister, but we know little of her.

After the tragic death of Abdullah Beg Khan, the burden of looking after the children fell upon the shoulders of Nasrullah Beg Khan. He was the Subedar of Agra on behalf of the Mahrattas, but then the territory of Agra passed into British hands. Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan Bahadur Rustam Jang of Ferozepur Jhirka and Jagirdar of Loharu, whose sister had been betrothed to Nasrullah Beg Khan, was a supporter of the British. He approached Lord Lake and secured for Nasrullah Beg a commission in the cavalry. Ghalib writes that Lord Lake issued an order to Nasrullah Beg to enlist horsemen in the army and was appointed Commander of a Regiment of four hundred horsemen. He was

granted a life-time Jagir with an annual income of about a lakh and a half rupees. Nasrullah Beg died suddenly in 1806. In exchange for his Jagir Lord Lake granted to the members of the bereaved family a fixed annual sum of ten thousand rupees, which was included in Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan's Jagir, but the Nawab did not give them more than three thousand rupees annually, out of which Ghalib used to receive only Rs. 750.

Khwaja Ghulam Hussain Commandant, maternal grandfather of Ghalib, as his appellation shows, was an honoured military officer of the Meerut Government and was one of the nobles of Agra. He had vast jagirs and property, which is apparent from one of Ghalib's letters, wherein he describes many blocks of houses and *havelis* in Agra that belonged to his grandfather. The income and the total value of the property can easily be estimated by the fact that Khwaja Ghulam Hussain's managing agent had slowly risen to a status in life which made it necessary for him to pay a sum of ten or twelve thousand rupees as revenue to the Government.

CHAPTER II

BOYHOOD AND EDUCATION

IT APPEARS that after the death of his uncle, Ghalib went to live with his grandfather. It was a happy-go-lucky sort of life that Ghalib enjoyed in his younger days at Agra. In his own words, he was about nineteen or twenty when he used to pass his days in the company of his friends, flying kites and playing chess until late at night. Ghalib seems to have been a youth of liberal ideas and as he was staying as an orphan with his rich grandfather, he was looked after with unusual tenderness and affection ; there must have been few restrictions on the young man's movements. Thus it was not unnatural that he got into the habit of being extravagant. As he had to spend much, perhaps to keep up his social status, it is not difficult to see how Ghalib acquired the early habit of borrowing money which involved him in great difficulties later on. Out of the annual sum that the members of the family used

to get from Nawaib Ahmad Bakhsh Khari, Ghalib received Rs. 750 only! and an equal sum was given to his brother Yusuf Khan. The remaining 1,500 rupees were received by Nasrullah Beg Khan's mother and his three sisters. When Ghalib had moved to Delhi, most probably his mother sent him some money. In view of the fact that the ancestors of Ghalib were soldiers by profession, Ghalib would have taken up military service, fought and died as a soldier, if he had allowed things to take their course, but nature had planned a different career for him—that of a poet. While his forefathers had carried steel all over Central Asia and had fallen in the battle-fields of India, the poet was destined to become a master of the pen and a writer of verse, who could rightfully claim equality with the world's front rank poets.

But with all his care-free life as a youth, the education of Ghalib was not neglected. He used to have lessons from Sheikh Muhammad Mu'azzam who was, in those days, one of the learned scholars of Agra. Ghalib's various technical references in his works show that he was fairly acquainted with the current

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knowledge of arts and sciences, such as Philosophy and Astronomy. Besides, he seems to be not wholly unacquainted with the medical knowledge prevalent in those days. He had also acquired a working knowledge of Arabic grammar. But one thing which is apparent from the very perusal of his poetry is that he had very carefully studied prosody and had mastered its intricacies, otherwise it would be impossible to attempt the kind of *ghazals* which he wrote with such great felicity, in spite of their unwieldy metres. Apart from his educational achievements, the most distinguishing factor is Ghalib's erudite scholarship in the domain of Persian literature. He was yet young when he was given to the study of Zuhuri and other great writers. He was a born poet and had begun his early attempts in poetry at the age of eleven and that too was perhaps in Persian (one of the poet's friends is said to have reminded the poet in Delhi that he had written a *Mathnawi* at a still younger age).

One of the most interesting aspects of Ghalib's education was that he had the good fortune of coming in contact with a Persian

scholar (a Parsi) who had adopted Islam as his faith and had come to Agra as a traveller about the year 1810 and stayed for two years with Ghalib. His original name was Hurmuz (or Hurmuzd) and was now called Abdus-Samad. He was a great scholar of Arabic and Persian, particularly of classical Persian (*Farsi-i-Qadim*). During his stay at Agra, he devoted his attention to Ghalib's education; his lessons in Persian grammar were of particular importance to the latter and had far-reaching effects on the poet's later Persian poetry and prose. In Ghalib's own words, "Mulla Abdus-Samad belonged to the race of the fifth Sassanian king, vastly read in Philosophy, particularly Logic and was a pious man from whom Ghalib learned both styles of writing Persian—with and without the mixture of Arabic words ; that is to say, gold was tested on touchstone....the teacher was without exaggeration the Jamasp of his time and the Buzurg-mihr of the contemporary world." Ghalib seems to have impressed his teacher greatly who in a letter makes a very affectionate reference to his pupil.

As for the art of poetry, Ghalib was not a

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regular pupil of any poet. It was only nature's gift, as is shown by his profound originality in his verse that made him the unique master of this art.

CHAPTER III

MARRIAGE AND DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

GHALIB married Umara Begum, the younger daughter of Nawab Ilahi Bakhsh Khan M'aruf, on Rajab 7, 1225 A. H., when he was only thirteen and his wife eleven. He often referred to his marriage as "imprisonment for life" and described a wife as a "shackle" and carrying the simile still further, Delhi was for him a "prison-house." The father-in-law of Ghalib was the younger brother of Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan Bahadur Rustam Jung, Rais of Ferozepur Jhirka and Jagirdar of Loharu. He was a very pious man and spent his days in devotion to God and was for this reason respected by his elder brother. M'aruf was a poet of no mean order. In his poetical efforts, he sought the advice of Shah Naseer of Delhi. He died in 1826 and was buried in the vicinity of Khwaja Nizam-ud-Din's tomb. Nawab Ilahi Bakhsh Khan had two sons and two daughters. One of his sons was Mirza Ali

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Bakhsh Khan Ranjur who had always very cordial relations with Ghalib. The other was Mirza Ali Nawaz Khan, Bunyadi Begum was the Nawab's elder daughter who was married to Nawab Ghulam Husain Masrur and the younger was Umara Begum, the life companion of Mirza Ghalib.

After his marriage, Ghalib seems to have stayed a few years at Agra, but according to one of his letters, dated February 16, 1862, to Nawab Ala-ud-Din, his journeys to and from Delhi began when he was only seven years of age ; he writes : "My dear soul! This is not the Delhi in which you were born; this is not the Delhi in which you have been educated... This is not the Delhi which I have been visiting since the time when I was seven. Again this is not the Delhi where I have been staying for the last" fifty-one years. It is a camp..." The facts stated by the poet himself, however, show that he left Agra just after his marriage and occupied the *Haveli* of Shaban Beg, for the first time, as his residential quarters. His regular stay in Delhi probably began in 1817 or 1818 A. D.

From the poet's letters to his friends and casual references in his poetry, one gets the impression that he had a very bizarre view of married life. The duties of a husband to his wife seem to have been very burdensome to Ghalib, and he felt the burden all the more, because he was married at so young an age. He was perhaps conscious of the fact when he said :—

Close to the nest, there lay very strong nets ;
We had not even flown before *we* were
 caught !

The verse brings to light the painful feelings of the poet which could not be softened even by the slow passage of time. There are some uncharitable references to the difficulties arising out of matrimonial relations, that one finds in the poet's works. Thus, while writing to a friend on the death of the wife of another friend, he quotes Hakim Sanai's verses, wherein the father said to his son :—

Good fellow ! indulge in "free love," but
 a wife ? Never!

Take advice from the people, not from me!

But all this does not necessarily mean that

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Ghalib had any aversion to marriage or desired to be set free from his duties. It was only the poet's way of giving expression to his natural sense of humour, in his peculiar way of writing in a lighter vein.

Beghum Ghalib, as she belonged to a very noble family and was the daughter of a pious father, inherited an orthodox sense of religion. Ghalib, on the other hand, was a liberal youth and was far from being an orthodox Muslim. He even ventured to drink against the traditions of his family. It is, therefore, said that his wife used to keep her cooking utensils separate from those of Ghalib. In view of these facts, one is led to think that the atmosphere of the house in such conditions was not peaceful, but evidence is not lacking that the couple led a fairly happy life and they shared each other's happiness and sorrows throughout their life. Whenever Ghalib was out of Delhi, he was very anxious to write to his wife; where'ver he might be—Calcutta, Lucknow or Rampur, he wrote to his wife in Delhi. Her anxieties were his own. He would always see that she had enough money to spend. It is true

that circumstantial difficulties pressed him hard, but he made no pretensions to hide his grief:—

" Married life is death to me. I have never been pleased with being so entangled."

Ghalib had seven children, but all of them died young. To avoid disappointment of his natural paternal sense, he adopted Mirza Zain-ul-Ahidin Khan Arif, the budding poet (Beghum Ghalib's nephew) as his son, but he, too, died in his youthful days to the great dismay of Ghalib. The poet wrote one of the most pathetic elegies found in Urdu literature on the death of young Arif; the first couplet of which runs :—

It was essential for you to wait for me, a few
days more !

Why did you go alone, now stay there alone a
few days more !

Arif was married to Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan's sister and had two sons—Baqir Ali Khan and Husain Ali Khan—who were held in great affection by Ghalib. The poet was never disturbed by their childish frolics. They would not let him take his meals in comfort. They would disturb his sleep, but all this did not

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perturb Ghalib. During the poet's trip to Rampur, Baqir and Husain were with him.

According to Hali, Ghalib never purchased a house as his personal property. He passed his days as a tenant, except that he occupied for sometime Kalai Khan's house for which he had to pay no rent. After leaving Kalai Khan's house, he moved to Hakim Muhammad Hasan Khan's Haveli where he stayed upto July, 1860. The poet used to move from one house to another according to his convenience, but never so far as to be outside the sphere of Qasim Jan ki Gali or Habash Khan ka Phatak. His last house, where he breathed his last, was behind the mosque, adjoining the Diwankhana of Hakim Mahmud Khan. The poet had this house in view :—

مسجد کے زیر سایہ اک گھر بنا لیا ہے
یہ بندہ کمنینہ ہمسایہ خدا ہے

In the shadow of a mosque, I have raised a
house,
This unworthy slave is thus a neighbour of God.

But it was not always that Ghalib occupied comfortable houses, as one can gather from some of his letters written to his intimate friends. In fact the conditions sometimes were awe-

inspiring as the poet writes after a heavy shower of rain :—

"I don't fear death ; I am confounded by lack of comfort- The ceiling has become a veritable sieve. If the cloud rains for two hours, the ceiling rains for four !"

The rainy season always brought great distress to Ghalib. While describing the condition of his abode once, he had to say :—

"...had the chance to stay in Noah's Ark for three months ; now have I attained salvation !"

With all these unavoidable handicaps, the poet had a fine taste in the choice of houses and tried to keep up a decent standard of living.

As will appear from the above, Ghalib's marriage was the cause of very close connections with the House of Loharu which also traces its ancestral link to Turkistan. The mention of the House of Loharu necessitates here a little digression. The direct connection of Ghalib's personal affairs such as his pension case along with the intricacies of a long-drawn out domestic

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quarrel that arose out of the passing of State administration into the hands of Nawab Shamsud-Din Ahmad Khan and many other such matters, presented in the following pages, would not be easily intelligible without a brief discussion of the domestic affairs of Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan's sons.

Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh had rendered great military services to Lord Lake and was, in recognition of his sendees, given the territory of Mewat and the State of Ferozepur Jhirka in 1805. The Nawab had also played the important rôle of a mediator between the Maharaja of Alwar and the British Government and, as a result of his efforts, their relations had considerably improved. The Maharaja of Alwar greatly appreciated the services of the Nawab and conferred the Pargana of Loharu on him. As the Nawab had a large estate, a large number of family members and relatives depended on him. The Nawab's nephew Mirza Ali Bakhsh Khan Ranjur and Ghalib stayed with the Nawab for a long time. During this peaceful period, the poet had compiled his Urdu Diwan (Bhopal copy),

when he was about twenty-five. He passed a good deal of his time at Ferozepur Jhirka. When the British forces attacked Bharatpur in 1825, both Ghalib and Ali Bakhsh were in the company of the Nawab. During these days, Mirza Ali Bakhsh asked Ghalib to write a treatise, comprising the various forms of address, words of courtesy, modes of expression, such as are usually used in the beginnings of letters. This request was responded to by the poet and he collected the general principles of Persian letter-writing in a booklet now called *Panj Ahang*, noted for its simplicity and direct expression.

In 1822, Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan had, by the permission of the British Government and the Maharaja of Alwar, declared Nawab Shams-ud-Din Khan, father of the famous poet, Dagh, the sole heir of his property. It appears that the three brothers did not agree to this decision. Some changes were afterwards effected in the terms. Thus in February, 1825, Nawab Shams-ud-Din transferred the State of Loharu to his two step brothers according to an agreement in consultation with his father,

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In October, 1826, the eldest son Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan took the administration of State affairs in his hands. Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan died in October, 1827 (Minu Maqam Fakhr-ud-Daulah—1243 A. H.). A great domestic quarrel arose on account of the mutual hatred between the members of Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan's family. The Nawab had two wives and the children of the two ranged themselves in two different camps against one another and Ghalib was also affected by the issues involved. The quarrel slowly took on a serious turn. Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan brought a suit against his step brothers that the Pargana of Loharu should be made over to him and his step brothers could only receive pensions. His step brothers in a cross-suit stated that they were entitled to a share in the cash, precious stones, pearls, jewellery and other valuables amassed by the late Nawab. The case went up for decision before the British Resident at Delhi. The case of Ghalib's pension was already going-on during the life-time of Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan. The new complications only added to his discomfort. The case was, in

the end, decided by the Resident in favour of Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan.

In 1830, Mr. William Fraser came to Delhi as Resident. He was a close friend of the late Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan and the Nawab's sons used to address him as "Uncle." Now the matter was again brought before Mr. Fraser. It was stated before him that the decision, as it stood, was to the sheer detriment of the younger brothers—Amin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan and Zia-ud-Din Ahmad Khan. It was urged that according to the bequest of the late Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh, the State of Loharu should go to the share of these two brothers. But Fraser could not help the two brothers to that extent. Amin-ud-Din, therefore, had to go to Calcutta personally to present his case. The Calcutta authorities accepted his appeal and declared the two brothers as the lawful owners of the Loharu State. When the news of the decision of the case reached Nawab Shams-ud-Din from Calcutta, he was greatly shocked and consequently it is said that he hatched a plot to kill Mr. Fraser who was believed to have influenced the decision of the case against him. It is also

said that such a scheme had already been thought out before the decision of the case.

The story goes that Karim Khan, a Rohilla cavalier and one Anya Mew, two of the Nawab's men were sent to Delhi to get rid of Mr. Fraser. For sometime they had to stay in Delhi waiting for a chance, but had to go back in disappointment to Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan who grew angry with them. The two men again returned to Delhi with a gun and finding a suitable time one pitch-dark night shot Mr. Fraser dead from ambush. Karim Khan and Anya escaped and the Nawab was informed of the event through Anya, who by overhearing a conversation sensed the secret that the Nawab wanted to dispose of him also to avoid the leakage of any *news*. Anya, therefore, ran away to save his life. In the meantime, Karim Khan was arrested on suspicion as a possible culprit. Anya, who was now in Bareilly, turned a Crown witness and made allegations exposing the conspiracy of Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan. As a consequence, Karim Khan was hanged and after sometime an order of death sentence was also passed against the Nawab. His State was confiscated and in

October, 1835, he was put on the gallows outside Kashmiri Gate, Delhi. It is said that the Nawab met his death very bravely and calmly. There were people who believed him to be an innocent man. The Nawab was buried in Qadam-i-Sharif.

Ghalib was always on good terms with Amin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan and Zia-ud-Din Ahmad Khan (Nayyar, Rakhshan), Ala-ud-Din Ahmad Khan ('Alai) and Shihab-ud-Din Ahmad Khan. They in turn had deep regard for the great poet who, it seems, had a real cause of grievance against Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan, as the former's Jagir was included in Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan's Jagir which had now passed into the hands of Nawab Shams-ud-Din Khan. In 1826, the differences between Ghalib and the Nawab began to take a deplorable turn. In this year (1826), when Mirza Ilahi Bakhsh M'aruf died, Ghalib's circumstances altered unfavourably. He was in dire need of money and his younger brother Mirza Yusuf had gone mad. In such a state of critical affairs, Ghalib planned a visit to the Nawab at Ferozepur Jhirka, who was in those days at

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Alwar. The Nawab returned after a good many days and met the visitor with outward courtesy and gave him words that were never translated into action. In fact he was feeding the poet on hopes, who returned to Delhi disappointed. As Ghalib now saw no hope of justice at the hands of the Nawab, he made up his mind to appeal against the distribution of property by the Nawab to the Court in Calcutta. Such were the circumstances in which he undertook his journey to East India.

In an atmosphere of suspicion and mutual hatred, Ghalib, who was a friend of Mr. Fraser, was blamed to have acted as a spy against Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan. The suspicion was further strengthened by the fact that Ghalib seldom moved out of his residential quarters during these days. The poet refutes these allegations in a letter to Imam Bakhsh Nasikh, but the language used by him is not so convincing.



CHAPTER IV

JOURNEY TO CALCUTTA

IN 1826, when there was tension between members of Ghalib's family, Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad Khan became the sole representative of his father, Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan. Under the aegis of the latter, Ghalib and his near relations used to receive only three thousand rupees as pension from Ferozepur Jhirka. The poet believed that the actual amount of pension should have been ten thousand rupees ; but the matter was not taken to the Court during Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh's administration. Now that the affairs of the State were taking a different turn, owing to the family disputes, and as Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmad had altogether stopped the payment of pension to Ghalib and his wife, the only remedy left to Ghalib was to go to Calcutta personally to present his case to the judicial authorities there. He demanded ten thousand rupees as the family pension and that the amount due since May 1806 should be fully paid. During these days, the pecuniary

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condition of Ghalib was far from satisfactory and the constant demands of creditors were threatening to prove the last straw. Before proceeding to Calcutta, the poet's friends had advised him to make up his differences with the Nawab. He, therefore, paid a visit to Loharu, but it served no useful purpose.

No definite date can be given of Ghalib's departure from Delhi to Calcutta, but it appears that he left Delhi a short time before his arrival at Lucknow where, according to his Persian writings, he seems to have stayed for about eleven months. He set off from Lucknow to East India on June 27, 1827 (Ziq'ada 26, 1242 A. H.). When the poet reached Lucknow, Ghazi-ud-Din Hyder was the King and Mu'tmad-Daulah Agha Mir was the Naib-us-Saltanat who had started his career from a humble position, but, with the help of Nawab Beghum and the Resident, he gained influence over the King and had now almost exclusive control of State affairs. The period of his administration constitutes a dismal tale of deteriorated statesmanship. Ghalib thought of presenting a *Kasida* to Agha Mir, but he found the

ceremonial conventions *infra dig*. His mind almost revolted against such condescension, and that was due to his "upbringing in the solitary chamber of liberty":

ناز پروردہٗ خلوت گہ آزاد گیم
کافر مگر بسرا پروردہٗ سلطان رفتم

I have been brought up by the beneficent
solitude of freedom;
I would be an infidel if I ever went to the
royal abode of a Sultan.

Men of letters of Lucknow seem to have welcomed Ghalib, but the nobles such as the notorious Agha Mir, who was undoubtedly a curse to the Nawab Wazirs of Oudh, lacked the necessary vision to appreciate the traveller's poetic genius. The poet, however, soon realised the futility of an approach to the up-start. There is a reference to Lucknow in one of the poet's *ghazah* :—

لکھنؤ آنے کا باعث نہیں کہلتا یعنی
ہوس سیر و تماشاً سورہ کم ہے ہم کو

The cause of coming to Lucknow does not
come to light,
As for the inclination to travel and sight-seeing
—we have little.

Ghalib bade farewell to Lucknow on Friday, June 27, and reached Cawnpore after three days, and shortly after proceeded to Banda. He passed through small villages, and then arrived in Allahabad and ultimately reached Benares when he was in indifferent health. The poet found the Hindu city very refreshing and its attraction was the cause of his writing a *Mathnavi*, *Chiragn-i-Dair*. The only cause of distress to the poet was the separation from his friends—Fazl-i-Haq, Husam-ud-Din, Amin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan etc., otherwise he was content. The beauty of Benares elicited verses of praise from the poet's pen:—

جہان آباد گسر نبود الم نیست
 جہان آباد بادا جائے کم نیست

If there be no Jahanabad (Delhi), there is no
 grievance;
 May the world be populous, there is no scarcity
 of accomodation!

Ghalib found Benares so pleasant a city that forty years after, he wrote in one of his letters that if he had visited the city in his youthful days, he would have settled there as a permanent citizen. Ghalib proceeded from

Benares to Patna and Murshidabad, and arrived in Calcutta on February 21, 1825, (Sha'ban 4, 1243 A. H.). There he rented a spacious house in the Haveli of Mirza Ali in Simla Bazar.

Before Ghalib's arrival in Calcutta, the news of Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh's death had reached him. The poet's meeting with the officials in Calcutta made him hopeful about his success in his pension case. During those days Mr. Andrew Sterling was Chief Secretary who knew Persian fairly well and, according to Ghalib, was a man of taste (the poet presented a *Kasida* to him which was greatly appreciated). Mr. Simon Fraser was then serving as Assistant Secretary. The latter met Ghalib in a very cordial manner with "an embrace and presentation of scent and betel-leaf." Mr. Sterling presented the poet's application, addressed to the Governor-General, to the Council, which, having regard to procedure,, ordered the application to be first presented to the Agent at Delhi. Ghalib, therefore, wrote to his legal adviser, Hira Lall, at Delhi to secure a recommendation from Sir Edward Colebrooke, but the letter and the power-of-attorney reached Delhi * after many

months. As Sir Edward had now gone on a tour, the application could not be presented. The Governor-General and his Council were also out of the station. In these circumstances, Ghalib could do but little about his case ; on the other hand, he had time enough to interest himself in poetic gatherings. There was a literary Association in the Calcutta Madrasah, under the auspices of which a monthly symposium used to be held. The symposium was a great literary entertainment which attracted a large audience with many prominent men of letters.

On one occasion, Ghalib recited a Persian *Ghazal* which evoked a storm of protest on the part of Indian scholars who relied upon the Persian scholarship of Mirza Qatil, for whom Ghalib had little regard. The correctness of the use of the word *hama* in the following verse was disputed :—

جزوے از عالم و از همه عالم بيشم
 همچو موئے که بتاں را زمياں پر خيزد

The objection was that the word '*alam*' could not be preceded by *hama* which required a plural noun after it and the authority which Ghalib's

opponents quoted was that of Mirza Qatil. But this was a wrong view and a ridiculous objection, for, the Persian poets such as Hafiz and others use the word as Ghalib used it. Among those who ranged themselves in the opposite camp against Ghalib were Maulvi Abdul Qadir of Rampur, Maulvi Karam Husain of Bilgram, Maulvi Ni'mat Ali of Azimabad and others. Mirza Ghalib also had his supporters. During those days Kifayat Khan, the Persian Ambassador, had come to Calcutta as a representative of Shahzada Kamran of Herat. He recited many verses supporting the right use of *hama'alam*. As Mirza Ghalib was a stranger in Calcutta, he did not like to be involved in a literary dispute which was bound to affect his peace of mind. He, therefore, wrote a *Mathnavi*, *Bad-i-Mukhalif* which is a sort of an *apologia* in which the poet takes the opportunity to clarify the objection brought against his *Ghazal* and describes his adverse circumstances. The attitude of the poet, however, is compromising. He did not like to humiliate Delhi by his behaviour, but at the same time, he deprecated the blindness of Indian scholars in setting up Qatil and Waqif as indisputable authorities, for, they were Indians

and could not be quoted as authority on chaste Persian. The opponents of Ghalib in fact represented a conservative school; Ghalib, on the other hand, was relying on a group of great Persian poets such as Zuhuri, 'Urfi, Naziri and Hazin, and far more upon his personal genius :—

زله بردار کس چرا باشم
من همایم مگس چرا باشم

Why should I depend on the charity of
another ?

I am a phoenix ; why should I be a fly ?

During his stay in Calcutta, Ghalib made the acquaintance of Maulvi Siraj-ud-Din Ahmad, who became one of the poet's very close friends and often wrote letters to him. On his request, Ghalib made a selection of his Urdu and Persian verse known as *Gul-i-Ra'na*, which is rarely found now, but its preface and final note by Ghalib are included in the poet's *Kulliat-i-Farsi*. The poet stayed in Calcutta for about two years. In the Beginning, matters seemed to take a favourable turn, but events were only leading to a *mirage*. There was disappointment in store for him. In a few

short lines the poet describes Calcutta, its people and the injustice done to him :—

گفتم از بہر داد آمد ام
 نفس بگیریز و سر بسنگ مزن

I said, "I have come here with a request for
 justice."

(She) said, "Runaway and don't strike your
 head against stone !"

It appears that the officials in Delhi and Calcutta had submitted reports favouring the cause of Mirza Ghalib, but, during this time, Colebrooke had to leave his office and a fresh investigation into the matter was undertaken. It was now of little use for Ghalib to continue his stay at Calcutta. He, therefore, returned to Delhi and on November 11, 1829, requested the new Agent, Francis Hawkins, to help him, but the Agent submitted his report in favour of Nawab Shams-ud-Din. Ghalib was apprised of the Agent's attitude, but he did not feel perturbed as he was sure that Mr. Sterling would set the matter right (*Guftam Sterling haq-parast ast*), but unfortunately the report had not yet reached Calcutta that Sterling died on May 23, 1830. The poet wrote an elegy on the occasion. The tide of events was now turning against Ghalib.

Lord William Bentinck, who had relied upon the validity of a document—dated June 7, 1806, purported to be issued by Lord Lake and,, according to which the Nawab had to pay only five thousand rupees to the relatives of Nasr Ullah Beg—which Ghalib maintained was of no value as it did not cancel an earlier letter of grant, dated May 4, 1806, gave his decision against Ghalib as Sir John Malcolm testified to the seal of Lord Lake on the disputed document. The poet had not miscalculated the coming events in Calcutta :—

گفتم این ماہ پیکراں چہ کس اند ؟
گفت خوبان کشور لندن

I said, "Who are these moon-like people ?"

(She) said, "The beautiful ones of the realm
of London !"

گفتم ایذاں مگر دے دارند ؟
گفت دارند لیک از آهن

I said, "Do they possess any heart ?"

(She) said, "They have, but of iron !"

Ghalib came to know of the decision of his case in August, 1831. He was not to rest satisfied with his lot. He took the matter further to the Governor-General and had a mind to

go to Calcutta once again, but he had no money to carry out his plans. He expected money from Lucknow in appreciation of his *Kasida*, but he had to wait—until the Governor-General's tour to Delhi. The dark night of disappointment had spread its wings over him and Ghalib saw no glimmer of hope. On his return to Delhi, Ghalib seldom moved out of his house. His only consolation was the company of his friends, such as Maulvi Fazl-i-Haq, Nawab Mustafa Khan, Nawab Amin-ud-Din Khan and Zia-ud-Din Khan, but in spite of his friend's sympathies, Ghalib's difficulties never showed signs of decrease. By the way, Ghalib wrote the preface to his *Diwan-i-Raikhta* in 1833 (April 16, Ziq'a'da 24, 1248 A. H.). As Lord William Bentinck paid a visit to Delhi, Ghalib did not attend the meeting where the nobles of Delhi had gathered to welcome him. He believed that Lord Bentinck had not been able to do justice to his case; he still further looked to Lord Auckland as a "cloud of mercy"; (applications were submitted to him in 1836).

During this period Mr. William Fraser was put to death (March 22, 1835). In this connection, as has been mentioned before, Nawab

Shams-ud-Din was arrested and was hanged (October 3, 1835). The personal property of the Nawab was put up for sale. Many other repercussions followed and the heirs of the Nawab submitted an application to the Government to safeguard their rights. Ghalib had now a chance to present the matter for reconsideration and demanded the amount of his pension which was calculated to be two lakhs and three thousand rupees.

Ultimately, Ghalib sent his pension case to London and in a *Kasida* addressed to Queen Victoria said :—

اَسْ بَادِ وَخَوْشِ بُوْدِ كَمِ شَهْنَشَا * بَحْرٍ وَبَرِ
اَنْجَامِ خَوَاهِشِ اَسَدِ اللّٰهِ خَانَ دَهْدِ

May it be, and it would only be good that the
Empress of sea and land

May at last fulfil the desire of Asad-ullah Khan!

In short, from 1827 to 1844, Ghalib had to face a storm of worries, arising out of his pension case. During this period the poet had entertained many kinds of vague desires and nourished hopes which in the end brought nothing but disappointment to him and the psychological effect of such untoward circumstances was

calculated to be grave. This accounts for the fact that Ghalib's poetry is full of pathos and not unoften depressing and cold.

A few months before the death of Mr. Fraser, Ghalib was thinking of gaining influence in the Shah's Darbar. , Akbar Shah was the ruler in those days and as Zafar was then considered not to be of sound mind, attempts were made for the recognition of Shahzada Saleem as the heir-apparent. Obviously with some prospective hopes, Ghalib wrote a *Kasida* in praise of Akbar Shah and Prince Saleem. But the Government did not approve of the plan. On the death of Akbar Shah, Zafar ascended the throne (October, 1837) and Ghalib had to readjust his attitude towards the ruler.

In 1835, after Nawab Shams-ud-Din had paid the penalty for taking part in the conspiracy against Mr. Fraser, Ali Bakhsh Khan came to stay with Ghalib. During these days Ghalib's Persian *Diwan*, *Mai Khana-i-Arzu*, had been compiled; its final note was written in 1837. The final note to the poet's Urdu *Diwan* was written by Nawab Zia-ud-Din in 1838.

From 1835 onwards Ghalib passed his days in expectation, surrounded by lingering hopes,

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but he never condescended to stoop below his dignity. In 1842 when the poet was invited as a candidate for a Persian professorship at the Thomson College, he refused to see the officials as a servant and did not accept the service. In fact Ghalib was conscious of his nobility, believed in the traditional conventions of aristocracy, and spurned any kind of reflection of humiliation against his person.

In 1842-43, Ghalib's *Diwan-i-Raikhta* was published. Those were the days when poetical symposiums were very popular in Delhi and Urdu and Persian *ghazals* were equally appreciated by the audience. Mirza Ghalib paid occasional visits to these *Musha'ras*, particularly to those arranged by Nawab Zia-ud-Din and Nawab Zain-ul-Abidin 'Arif. Mamnun, Sahbai, Azurda, Zauq, Momin and many others were among the prominent poets who used to attend these literary gatherings. During the year 1845, Persian *ghazals* had become very popular in these *Musha'ras*, Ghalib published his Persian *Diwan* in 1846.

CHAPTER V

IN PRISON

IN 1847 (1264 A. H.), a very unfortunate event took place. The year synchronised with the poet's visit to the prison-house, the cause being his indulgence in gambling. The authorities in those days were very strict against social crimes and consequently a large number of gamblers were hauled up before the Court and sent to jail. The reports published in a contemporary paper, *Ahsan-ul-Akhbar*, throw sufficient light on the conditions prevailing in Delhi during this period. According to a report published in the paper, dated June 20, 1845, "The Kotwal of the City arrested about sixteen men for gambling and brought them before the Court. Nine men were sentenced to six month's imprisonment and fifty rupees fine...in default of payment of fine, such men were to be fettered and made to work repairing roads."

Ghalib was not given to gambling in the bazaar sense. It was with him more of a social pastime. He took keen interest in chess and other such games, but while playing these

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games, there used to be a nominal bet. As the Kotwal of the City was not on good terms with the poet, he brought a false charge of gambling against him. The Magistrate, Mr. Roberts, before whom the case came up for hearing, knew little about Ghalib's social status and other personal affairs. He passed an order of six months⁵ imprisonment with two hundred rupees as fine against the poet and in default of payment of fine, six month's further imprisonment. An additional payment of fifty rupees could relieve him of penal servitude. The decision was declared on or about July 2, 1847. The case went up in appeal before the Sessions Judge, who was closely acquainted with Ghalib and used to meet him freely in social gatherings ; but even he did not pay heed to the matter and upheld the decision of the lower Court. A further appeal to the higher Court proved of little use. After three months, the Magistrate *suo moto* sent a report to the Sadr, and Ghalib was released after having been behind the bars for three months.

Inside the Jail, Ghalib passed his days as if he were inside a judicial lock-up—with restraint on his movements (probably he was not keep-

ing good health then). Meals, clothes and other requisites reached him from home and there were few restrictions on his friends⁵ visits to him. (The poet in his verse says that the jailer looked after his needs). With all these facilities, Ghalib regarded his imprisonment as a great insult to his name and deeply felt that his prestige had been considerably lowered. Public opinion had protested against the injustice done to the poet who was a man of high social status and was held in great respect by the people. It was at the same time feared that the poet would not be able to endure the rigours of imprisonment.

Ghalib was involved in this case on the basis of wrong information supplied by those who were inimically disposed towards him. Bahadur Shah wrote a letter of recommendation to Mu'azzam-ud-Daulah Bahadur for the release of the poet, explaining therein that he was one of the nobles of the city and all that had happened was due to the evil intentions of his envious foes. The response thereto was that the case was going on in a law court and the law could not consider any such recommendation.

Within the four walls of the prison-house,
Ghalib gave expression to his feelings in one of
his very important poems, *Habsiyya* :—

I wish to begin my song about bondage in the
prison-house,
The grief of my heart has disclosed a secret, I
utter a cry !

The poem describes the coming of the poet
to the jail and the inmates⁵ greetings to him.
The poet's usual pessimistic tune is predominant
throughout:—

گرچه توفیق گرفتاری جاویدم نیست
لیکن از دهر دگر خوش دلی آیدم نیست

Although there is no order as to my eternal
imprisonment,
Yet I do not any more expect happiness from
Time.

During these dark days, Nawab Mustafa
Khan Bahadur Shaifita was looking after
Ghalib and he provided him with great facilities,
without which the event would have proved a
tragedy for Ghalib who deeply appreciated the
kindness of the Nawab:—

مصطفیٰ خان کہ دریں واقعہ غمخوار من است
 گر بمیرم چه غم از مرگ عزادار من است

Mustafa Khan who shares my grief in this
 mishap—

If I die, I need not fear death—is my mourner.

In a Persian *Kasida* in praise of Nawab
 Mustafa Khan, the poet expressed his deep
 debt of obligation to the Nawab :—

بشنود بے آنکہ باد آن را برد
 ناله گر در کنج زندان می زنم

He hears—without the agency of the wind—

My cry, even if I utter it in the corner of the
 prison-house!

CHAPTER VI
IN THE KING'S COURT

ON HIS release from prison, before he had served the full term of his sentence, Ghalib was staying with Sheikh Naseer-ud-Din *alias* Kalai Mian, a Sufi, revered by Bahadur Shah. Through Kalai Mian, who was kindly disposed towards Ghalib, the latter not only had an easy access to the King's court, but also gained a considerable influence there. Before Kalai Mian's recommendation, Ghalib had already established his connection with the members of the Royal family as he often paid visits to the Fort on various occasions, submitted *Kasidas* and received presents and *Khal'at* in appreciation thereof. Thus we find a *Kasida* in Ghalib's *Kulliat* in praise of Akbar Shah who died in 1837. There were people at the court who did not like to see Ghalib gain a position of influence there and were perhaps creating obstacles in his way. Thus the poet, in a *Kasida* to the King, brings to his notice the fact that he did not find his way to the Royal Assembly :—

ببارگه نرسم خانه سپهر خراب
 ندیم شاه نشوم روئے روزگار سیاه
 چه سرکنم روش صبح گستری چون مرا
 ببزم خسرو کیتی ستان نباشد راه

I don't find access to the King's court; may the
 house of sky perish !
 I am not an associate of the Shah ; may the
 face of Time turn black !
 How can I start a new career of singing
 praises when I
 Do not find my way to the Assembly of the
 world-conquering King.

There are verses in which Ghalib made sarcastic remarks against his rivals and the satirical expression of the poet reveals the hidden influences working against him.

On June 4, 1850, Ghalib had the honour to receive the title of Najm-ud-Daula, Dabir-ul-Mulk, Nizam Jang from the King and was appointed a writer of the history of the Timur dynasty, a post which carried an annual sum of six hundred rupees as emolument and *Khal'at* Ghalib used to receive his monthly pay regularly up to April, 1857, except on one occasion when an order was issued to the effect that the Employees in the Fort should receive their pay

in a lump sum twice a year. As the poet always badly needed money, the order proved a source of distress to him. He, therefore, submitted a few verses, characteristic of his humour, to the King and soon had his grievance removed.

The year 1850 proved very auspicious for Ghalib; besides the great honours that were showered on him in the form of titles and his appointment as a chronicler, he was asked to work as a tutor to the heir-apparent Shahzada Fath-ul-Mulk, the remuneration being four hundred rupees annually. (The Shahzada, who had married the widow of Nawab Shams-ud-Din—Dagh's mother, it seems, attached no importance to past events). But Prince Fath-ul-Mulk was not destined to live for more than two years after Ghalib's appointment.

In the beginning of *Mihr-i-Nimroz*, Ghalib throws some light on his access to the King through the agency of Kalai Mian, but Hakim Ahsan-Ullah Khan's personal regard for the poet and appreciation of his prose were in no degree less responsible for Ghalib's appointment as a compiler of the history of the Timurid Kings—*Mihr-i-Nimroz** Thus Ghalib writes:—

" If it were lawful in the *Shari'at*, I would

have said, 'The King is Alexander and the Hakim, Aristotle'..."

Hakim Ahsan-Ullah Khan used to collect the necessary historical material and write in a rough manner for Ghalib who transformed it into Persian prose in his ornate style. The first part of *Mihr-i-Nimroz* was completed in 1852 (in which year Momin and 'Arif died—'Arif's death was a great shock to the poet) and was printed by order of the King in 1855. *Mihr-i-Nimroz* comprised the historical events under the Timurid Kings up to the death of Humayun. The other part which was to include the historical period from Akbar's accession to the days of Bahadur Shah II was never undertaken by the poet. It was proposed to be called *Mah-i-Nim-mah*.

Ghalib's closer associations with the Fort were pregnant with many changes in his literary efforts. As the King was himself a poet and wrote Urdu verse, Ghalib had to write Urdu *ghazals* to the taste of his patron. Owing to his preoccupation with *Mihr-i-Nimroz*, the poet's correspondence with his friends was now carried on in Urdu and in later years was published in the form of a book which increased the literary reputation of Ghalib. In 1855, the King confer-

red on Ghalib the honour of correcting his verses and the fact must have greatly enhanced his social prestige. During the period following 1850, his rivalry with Zauq became all the more acute and, in December, 1851, the presentation of *Sihra* to Prince Jawan Bakht, in the closing lines of which Ghalib had indulged in poetic licence, led to a literary duel between the two prominent poets at the court. But Ghalib was fully conscious of the adversity of the circumstances and the atmosphere in which he was passing his days. He wrote to Nawab Sa'd-ud-Din Shafaq that it was only in response to the Prince and the Queen that he had undertaken to attempt the *Sihra* and was not interested in carrying on the conflict further. His only defence against his rival was :—

"All that is pride for you in your speech, is an
insult to me."

Since Ghalib's visit to Lucknow, he was anxious to establish his connection with the Kings of Oudh and, to this end, he wrote *Kasidas* to be presented at Lucknow (the first he wrote, was perhaps after November, 1832), **but** fortune did not favour him. The nobles at

Lucknow were blind to poetry and if there was appreciation at all, the intermediaries—Raushan-ud-Daula and one Munshi being dishonest, the money sent to the poet never reached him. It was in 1852 that Ghalib's *Kasidas* bore fruit, when Wajid Ali Shah's Government granted an allowance of rupees five hundred to the poet, but now the days of the kingdom of Oudh were numbered and in 1854 Wajid Ali Shah, the last King of Oudh, was sent to Calcutta as a State prisoner. The effect on Ghalib of the collapse of the Government of Oudh was to be compensated by his connections soon to be established with the Darbar of Rampur. Nawab Yusaf Ali Khan Nazim, of Rampur, came to Delhi in his younger days for study. The young Nawab in those days used to be taught Persian by Ghalib and the relations so established were further strengthened through the influence of Maulvi Fazl-i-Haq, who was a scholar of repute in his day and had been invited to Rampur by the Nawab. On Maulvi Sahib's request, Ghalib presented his *Diwan* and Persian *Kasida* to the Nawab Sahib who honoured the poet by appointing him his *Ustaz* and thenceforth looked after his worldly needs.

Political events in India were now under the shadow of the spirit of change and forbode a dismal future. The Fort of Delhi with its residents was faced with far-reaching changes. In 1854 very important decisions were made as to the removal of the Royal family and other allied important matters. Poor Ghalib, who was too old and enfeebled by his mode of life and circumstances, could not face the situation—not to say anything about his concern about the circumstances and forces around. He had caught a glimpse of the approaching tragedy. Thus he writes to a friend :—

”از شب عید خاقان رنجور است - حالا دیگر چه
رونمایند و بمن که در سایه دیوارش غنوده ام
چه رود“ -

"Since the 'Id night the King is ill—now what else would happen—and what would befall me who sleep in the shadow of his wall?"

The Royal master was in fact deserted by his courtiers ; even his close friends left him to his fate. When the terrific storm was at its height, the last of the Moghuls found himself all alone. The poet had seen that the wind was against the Moghuls; he, therefore, inclined towards the British and sent a Qasida to

Queen Victoria through Lord Canning with a request to the Empress to confer on him a suitable title and *Khal'at* as was the custom of the kings of Rum and Iran. The poet probably suggested that he should be graced with the title of "Queen's Poet". In the beginning of 1857, the officials informed him that his application would be disposed of after due enquiry. The poet was now looking forward to brighter days when the smoke of tragedy that was seen rising in the early fifties, enveloped Delhi in a dark cloud.



CHAPTER VII

1857 AND AFTER-

AFTER the death of the great Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir in 1707, the State affairs began to show signs of drifting towards a chaos. The successors of the great Emperor, the statesmen and military officers could not check the forces of disintegration which were slowly creeping into the Empire. There were kings and viziers—Shah Alams and Ftmad-ud-Daulas, but the political system defied their petty efforts. The Moghul soldiery was now a strange contrast to a handful of Mirzas and Beks who followed Babur (that most admirable of the Asiatic Princes) to India and established within a short space of time an Empire. The Moghuls were now retiring and had lost the essential will and force to control their circumstances—the ruling class was now facing social decay on an unprecedented scale. The story of the post-Moghul period forms a woeful chapter in world history.

After the days of Shah Alam II, the Empire presented the sight of a dying candle which lost

its last glow and flicker with the removal of Bahadur Shah II from the Fort of Delhi as a consequence of the Mutiny in 1857 :—

یا شب کو دیکھتے تھے کہ ہر گوشہ بساط
 دامن باغبان و کف گل فروش ہے
 لطف خرام ساقی و ذوق صدائے چنگ
 یہ جنت نگاہ وہ فردوس گوش ہے
 یا صبحدم جو دیکھتے آکر تو بزم میں
 نے وہ سرور و سورنہ جوش و خروش ہے
 داغ فراق صحبت شب کی جلی ہوئی
 اک شمع رہ گئی ہے سو وہ بھی خموش ہے

It was—that we saw at night every corner of
 the carpet—
 The skirt of the gardener and the palm of a
 flower-seller.
 The joy of the gait of the Saki and the rapture of
 the cry of the lute
 This—the Paradise of Sight and that—the
 Firdaus of the Ear!
 And now, on coming early in the morning,
 we would see in the Assembly,
 Neither that joy and rejoicing, nor that tumult
 and cry.
 Burnt by the scar of separation of last night's
 gathering,
 There remains a candle, and that even is dead !

A short account of the events during the Mutiny is given in one of Ghalib's own writings, *Dast-anbuy*, which is more or less a private diary of the poet, in which he used to record the daily events as were reported to him. The book is not of so great a value, a fact which can be inferred from a letter to one of the poet's friends. The letter runs :—

"I will send a copy (of *Dast-anbuy*) to the Nawab Governor-General Bahadur as a present and another copy will be sent through him to the Queen of England. Now, you can well imagine what would be its style—and why should the printers object to its printing ?"

Besides, *Dast-anbuy* was written by a person who seldom moved out of his house during the eventful days of the Mutiny, but still there is much which throws useful and sufficient light on contemporary events.

"The Mutiny broke out on May 11, 1857," says Ghalib, "when all of a sudden the walls and doors of the Fort and Delhi city were shaken and commotion overtook the earth. On that day, a few soldiers from amongst the vengeance-seeking army of Meerut entered the city.

All of them uncompromising and rebellious—thirsty for the blood of the English as well as of the wardens of the city..." While the army from Meerut marched to Delhi and disturbed the peace of the city by inciting the inflammable material to rise, there were, according to Ghalib, a few peaceably disposed citizens who confined themselves to the corners of their houses and had no connection with the rebellion. The poet refers to himself :—

"One of the sorrow-stricken was I who stuck to my house."

Terrific noise and news of the disturbance reached the poet, but he could not enquire into the matter. In the meantime, news came that the British Agent and the officers of the Fort were murdered, and the cavaliers and foot-men ran in all directions. The rebels, it is said, in their fury resorted to wholesale murder of the British, spilt blood to the extent that the earth was all blood. The cruelty of the Meerut soldiers to the British "fairy-faced women and rose-like children" greatly shocked the poet as is revealed by his feelings expressed in *Dast-anbuy*.

As the days passed, more insurgents rushed into Delhi and encamped in different places. The Fort and gardens were turned into stables and the King's chamber was used as a sleeping-room. The events in Delhi and around it were daily adding to the prevailing disorder. News of the murder of army officers from moffussii stations came pouring in. The peasants in villages rose in rebellion, joined hands with the soldiers and moved towards Delhi to claim their share in the spoils of the Imperial City. In the words of the poet, "The city was without a King and the people without a leader; the robbers were under no fear of arrest or prosecution : houses were laid waste...". The nobles of the city were facing a crisis ; the families of the *elite* found themselves in great helplessness and poverty. These unfortunate events led to a great social metamorphosis and the aristocratic families had to undergo tyrannies beyond description. Most of them were driven out of Delhi; many of them moved to Qutub Sahib and its vicinity, and many wandered away, never to return.

Inside the city, the high class people passed

their days in unthinkable poverty ; their valuables and property had been looted and there was nothing left to wear or spread underneath to sleep on. On the other hand, the mob saw in those dark days of Delhi the appearance of a glorious dawn as it would mean a change in their destiny,

Bahadur Shah, the last Moghul King, was asked by the insurgents to be their leader, but according to Ghalib, they came round him as a halo round the moon. At last the insurgents came into conflict with the British forces and were driven away when the British attacked Kashmiri Gate. Now that the British forces had captured the city, wholesale arrests and murder were still the order of the day. The inhabitants of the city closed their doors in panic. The insurgents were hovering around Ajmeri, Turkoman and Delhi Gates. The British being infuriated, resorted to extreme martial measures—people were killed and houses were set on fire. In great confusion and panic, the inhabitants of the city began to leave their houses and moved out of the four walls of the city.

During these stormy days, Ghalib quietly sat in his house waiting for the storm to pass over. In an atmosphere of suspicion and uncertainty, he writes:—

"I said, when I have done no wrong, I would not deserve any reproach. Neither the English kill the innocent, nor is the climate of the city unpleasant. How does it concern me that I should throw myself into thoughts (fears) of destruction and, falling and rising, take the way (out). . . ."

On September 18, 1857, the city and the Fort passed into the hands of the British. After that, Ghalib writes, his lane also had come under the dark shadow of the Mutiny and the noise of 'strike and kill' reached it. The residents of the houses, as they were in a state, of fear, closed their doors against outsiders. During these days, the city presented a deserted view. The bazaars were closed. There was little to eat and less to drink. The poet in such conditions was forced to sell his clothes to get something to eat. He had no clothes except those of daily use. He therefore, once wrote:—

"You would say, others eat bread, I eat clothes!"

Those days were terrible. No one could move about freely in the streets and only few could venture out to fetch water. It was, somehow, under the protection of the Maharaja of Patiala's men who were posted near the house of the Hakim family, that Ghalib's servants once moved out to fetch water. As they could not go out far away to the well of sweet water, they only returned with salt water. The poet, as he writes, passed his days as if he were a prisoner. No one came to talk to him, nor did he go out to see things for himself. Certainly, he could speak of himself "My ears are deaf and my eyes are blind." One day when there was great scarcity of water, a shower of rain fell, and Ghalib managed to collect water in a vessel by spreading a piece of cloth over it. Thus he says :—

"This time the merciful cloud brought water from the fountain of life and surely what Alexander sought in his kingdom and did not find, this (Ghalib), with a bitter palate and given to drinking salt-water, found in a desert."

It appears that, owing to the presence of

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Patiala's soldiers, the house of Ghalib remained safe, but the jewellery and other valuables that Begum Ghalib had secretly sent to Kalai Shah's house for safe deposit, were dug out by the victorious forces. When the secret was disclosed to Ghalib, it was too late and he consoled himself with the idea that "as it was to go, it did not go from his house."

Dast-anbuy describes an incident which occurred on October 5, and it must have caused great anxiety to Ghalib. Some English soldiers jumped over the wall and entered Ghalib's lane and, ignoring other houses, turned their attention to the poet's residence. They did not touch his property but took 'Arif 's two sons and a few neighbours to Col. Browne, where after a bit of enquiry, Ghalib was allowed to return to his house that very day. Another version is that a certain friend of the poet had approached the Colonel and, owing to his timely intervention, the poet was let off.

During those days of social upheaval, one can easily imagine the state of the poet's domestic affairs. His brother, Mirza Yusaf, had been suffering for a long time from mental derangement. He resided in a house at a considerable

distance from that of Ghalib. He had a wife and children, but, it seems that during those troublous days, his wife and children had deserted him under pressure of circumstances and in his house there remained only a couple of old servants—a woman servant and a *darban*. Ghalib came to know of all this, but, under the shadow of the Mutiny, he could do nothing practical for his dearly beloved brother. The poet was always thinking as to how his brother passed the night and what he ate in the day, but he knew so little about him that he could not say whether "he was alive, or, had died of hardship."

Nawab Mo'in-ud-Din, who was related to Ghalib, writes in his account of the Mutiny that Mirza Yusuf, who was of unsound mind, came out of his house on hearing the noise of gun-fire and was killed, but, according to Ghalib, the old *darban* of Mirza Yusuf brought the news on the morning of October 19, that the Mirza had died the previous night after five days' continuous illness. Mirza Ghalib was now facing a double tragedy. Circumstanced as he was, the funeral of Yusuf required so

many things to be done which lay beyond Ghalib's power. But his neighbours showed great sympathy towards him; they took two or three *chadars* with them to use as a shroud for the corpse and buried Yusuf close to a mosque.

After the fall of Delhi, for some months the balance turned in the other direction and resort was had to force "to lay the dust of disturbance":—

چوک جس کو کہیں وہ مقتل ہے
گھر نمونہ بنا ہے زنداں کا

What they call Chowk is a death-haunt;
The house is comparable to a prison!

The poet passed his days and nights in constant anxiety and unrest. People carried news about one another to the officers and as a consequence, many arrests were made. On February 2, the officer in charge of the city took into custody Hakim Mahmud Khan with sixty other people. Fortunately, the Hakim Sahib and a few other dignitaries were released after three days. Ghalib and many other prominent people of Delhi had sought the protection of the Hakim Sahib who used his influence to save

those against whom complaints were made.

Most of Ghalib's friends and relatives suffered greatly as a result of the Mutiny., On the day of the fall of Delhi, Nawab Zia-ud-Din and Nawab Amin-ud-Din thought of going to Lahore with their families, but they had not yet reached Mihr-i-Wali when robbers surrounded them and took away everything except their apparel. Their houses in Delhi were plundered and buildings were rased to the ground. Nawab Zia-ud-Din and Husain Mirza had to face great odds; the destruction of their houses is all the more lamentable as they used to collect Ghalib's manuscripts of Urdu and Persian prose and poetry which perished with their houses.

A few days after, five other chiefs (Jagirdars) of the dependencies of Delhi were put under arrest. Many nobles fled from Delhi with their families. Their houses were searched and looted; valuables were carried away and the houses were burnt. Some of the princes were shot dead ; others were hanged. Out of those who remained, some were thrown into the

prison-house and some sought safety in flight, never to return. Against the unfortunate King who was keeping indifferent health, a case by way of enquiry was instituted. The Muslim population of Delhi was the target of all kinds of atrocities and, according to the estimate of Ghalib, there were only about a thousand souls left in the city during a period of five months' constant disturbance and Ghalib was one of them. Most of the Muslims had gone out to the suburbs of Delhi where they had to encounter untold miseries.

In December, 1857, and January, 1858, it appears that the people were under pressure of official high-handedness and it was difficult for the citizens to communicate with one another. Thus Ghalib writes: "I put it to you, if I were to write, what should I write? Can I write, or, is there anything to write? What is all that you have written? What is that I write now? It is (all) that up till now we are alive. Any thing besides, neither you would write nor I . "

In another letter :—

".....But-can write nothing; if we happen

to meet again, we would say—otherwise, *inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raji'un.*"

The awe-inspiring series of events that were taking place around Ghalib made him think, and think in a different line. His inclination carried him to the extent of wholly dissociating himself from the Fort lest he should be involved in difficulties with the Royal family (possibly share their fate). Bahadur Shah, however, met the tragedy like a brave man. He was to be transported to Rangoon where he passed his last days and never forgot his dignity. It is said that the Queen was a source of infinite source of inspiration and courage to the Shah in exile. The Royal couple passed their days in complete resignation and maintained their social status by selling the most valuable diamonds and pearls that had passed to them from the great Moghul dynasty as a legacy. Ghalib refers to himself in one of his letters (written during these days), as a humble poet who had only undertaken the task of writing history and correcting verse which could be looked upon either as service or labour.

Among the various limitations that were

imposed upon Ghalib, a very serious one was the lack of wine which continued to destroy his peace of mind up to December, 1858. He says in a letter :—

"There is no place to go (to) ; there is none to come to me. That '*araq*, which kept up the required energy, is not available."

On the first of November, 1858, a Declaration of General Amnesty was issued and the occasion was celebrated by a *chiraghan* in Delhi. The poet also took part in the celebrations.

Many of Ghalib's friends lost their lives during the Mutiny and their loss was keenly felt by Ghalib. Among the contemporary men of letters who were intimately known to Ghalib were Maulvi Fazl-i-Haq Khairabadi, Mufti Sadr-ud-Din Azurda and Nawab Mustafa Khan Shaifta. After the Mutiny Maulvi Fazl-i-Haq was accused of having rendered help to the insurgents and was sentenced to transportation for life to the Andamans. A case was instituted against Mufti Sadr-ud-Din Azurda. The Mufti Sahib's life was, however, saved. Nawab Mustafa Khan Shaifta, the author of *Gulshan-i-Baikhar*, who is reputed for his simplicity and purity of style,

was also accused of having given help to the insurgents and was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. In January, 1859, however, he was granted pardon.

During the Mutiny, the economic condition of Ghalib had descended to its lowest ebb and his sources of income had been unavoidably closed. The payment of the fifty rupees he used to receive from the Fort and the annual sum of seven hundred and fifty rupees—his family pension, came to a stop forthwith, owing to the tumultuous state of affairs in Delhi. Bahadur Shah had his own worries. British administration had been upset by the unexpected fiery insurrection that had its beginning in Meerut and shortly engulfed Delhi in its flames. After conditions had reverted to a normal state, Ghalib was accused of having sympathy with the rebel soldiers and as a consequence his pension was suspended. Ghalib did not receive his pension for three years. Fortune favoured him in May, 1860, when he received the full sum due on account of his pension; but it was, however, some years later that his request for *Khil'at* was favourably considered. In July, 1859, Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan

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granted him a monthly allowance of a hundred rupees, but the sum was not sufficient to meet his liabilities and domestic needs.

Hearing the news of Nawab Mustafa Khan Shaifta's release, who had been sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, but was later found innocent, Ghalib undertook a journey to Meerut in January, 1859, in order to see the Nawab Sahib who had been so kind to him in his adverse circumstances.

The suspension of Ghalib's pension was the cause of his writing many *Kasidas* to higher officials—one was sent to Queen Victoria. On March 17, 1858, the Commissioner of Delhi wrote back to Ghalib that it contained nothing but praise. A few months after, *Dast-anbuy* was printed and the poet sent a few copies (perhaps to please the authorities) to England and presented a few to the officials in India, but, Ghalib was still under the shadow of official suspicion. He was not invited to the Darbar held at Meerut in 1860, and still greater disappointment must have been caused by the return of the *Kasida* written to Lord Canning, with the remarks—"such things should not be sent to us any further."

In January, 1860, Ghalib paid a visit to Rampur probably to seek the Nawab's intervention in his pension case. The Nawab welcomed the poet with all the friendly conventions and, by way of appreciation of the poet's learning and art, granted him a monthly allowance of Rs. 200 during the poet's stay at Rampur, and one hundred rupees in case he stayed in Delhi. But, as Ghalib had taken along with him 'Arif 's two children, he shortly returned to Delhi (in March) when he received his pension that was due.

The criticism of *Burhan-i-Qati*—the well-known Persian dictionary compiled by Maulvi Muhammad Husain, of the Deccan—which took the shape of *Qati-i-Burhan* early in 1859 and was published in 1861 (later called *Dirafsh-i-Kaviani*), gave rise to bitter resentment on the part of a certain section of Indian scholars. Ghalib, as a reading of *Mihr-i-Nimroz* and *Dast-anbuy* shows, was given to writing classical Persian with Dasatirish vocabulary, to the exclusion of Arabic words. His peculiar aptitude for writing chaste, but archaic, Persian and his vast study enabled him to find fault with the Maulvi's dictionary ; but in his seal

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for criticism, the poet rather went out of his way to criticise the Maulvi himself. A storm of protest rose against Ghalib's attitude and his criticism, which almost bewildered Ghalib and his friends. The criticism, owing to its pungency, with all its value, made the poet's life for sometime very unpleasant.

CHAPTER VIII

THE POET'S DECLINING YEARS

FROM 1860 onwards, Ghalib's health was failing, as his letters show, and during his declining years, physical ailments robbed him of his peace of mind in his old age. Mental weakness and dizziness would not allow him to correct the verses sent to him for *Mah*. On the occasion of Nawab Kalb Ali Khan's succession, 1865, Ghalib went to Rampur with the young Mirzas—Baqir Ali Khan and Husain Ali Khan. The poet stayed there for three months. On his way back to Delhi, he fell ill in Muradabad, where Sir Syed Ahmad Khan looked after his comfort (Sir Syed was then Sadr-us-Sudur there). After a few days, the poet recovered his health and made his way to Delhi. Although he now gained temporary relief, his health was giving way. In a letter dated, May 12, 1866, he says :—

"I was weak before, I am now half dead;
I was dead before, I shall be soon blind ,"

It seems Ghalib was getting tired of life as he wrote :—

خرم آن روز کزیں منزل ویراں گزرم

Happy is the day when I shall pass this deserted *Manzil* !

And it is not difficult to imagine why he exclaimed:—

اے مرگ ناگہاں تجھے کیا انتظار ہے ؟

O imminent Death ! what awaiteth thou ?

During the last few years, the poet was too weak mentally and physically to attempt serious verse. Probably he wrote his last Persian *Ghazal* in 1865, in response to Nawab Amin-ud-Din's request and his last Urdu *Ghazal* in 1866, at the request of Mirza 'Ala-ud-Din (the Nawab's son). Even during his illness, the poet carried on correspondence with his friends and was conscious of the value of his friendly communications. '*Ud-i.Hindi* (a collection of the poet's letters) was published in October, 1868, but *Urdu-i-Mifalla* was not destined to see the light of day during the poet's lifetime.

For some years before the end had drawn near, it had become almost impossible for the

poet, says Hali, to move about freely. He was usually confined to his bed and took little food. Khawaja 'Aziz-ud-Din 'Aziz, of Lucknow, has left a descriptive sketch of the poet's condition in which he saw the great artist, when he stopped at Delhi, on his way to Kashmir. Says the Khawaja :—

"Mirza Ghalib's house was made of *pucka* bricks. It had a big gate adjoining which there was a room and in that room was a *charpai*; on it was lying an old man of about eighty or eighty-two, with a fragile, emaciated body ; he had a book on his breast which he was reading—his eyes probing into it: this was Mirza Ghalib who was probably glancing through the *Diwan* of Qa'ani.

We salaamed him, but he was so deaf that our voice did not reach his ear. We then thought of returning presently; in the meantime Ghalib raised himself with the help of a side bar of the *charpai* and looked towards us. We salaamed him again; with great difficulty he descended from the *charpai* and sat on the carpet, asked us to sit by him and placed the inkstand and paper before us, saying :—

'I can see a little with my eyes, but, I

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cannot hear with my ears. All that I ask—please write down its answer. . . . !' During the conversation, the poet ordered his servant to bring his meal and the Khawaja, to avoid disturbance to the old poet, begged leave of him but they were politely asked to wait and a feeble voice was heard, : 'You took the trouble perhaps to see me. That is very kind of you ! Did you notice my weakness, it is difficult for me to move about; did you see the condition of my sight, I do not recognise a man ; did you mark my hearing capacity, although one may shout as loudly as possible, I cannot hear ; you have noticed my mode of reciting a *Ghazal*—you have listened to my *kalam*. There is one thing left—what I eat and how much I eat; please note before going away.' In the meantime, the meal was brought which consisted of two light loaves, a small quantity of roasted meat in a tray, and also some fruit. The poet had hardly taken two morsels when he finished his meal. We wondered how the old man lived on such a small quantity of food."

A few days before his death, the poet lost consciousness, but occasionally recovered his

senses. Hali visited the poet the day before his death when he was feeling a little better. He was then dictating a letter to Nawab 'Ala-ud-Din Ahmad Khan. The Nawab had enquired after the poet's health from Loharu. The poet dictated :—

"What do you ask me about my condition ?
—You might enquire from my neighbours
in a day or so....."

During his last days as the end was drawing near, the poet was often heard reciting his pathetic verse with subdued breath :—

دم واپسین بر سر راه ہے
عزیزو اب اللہ ہی اللہ ہے

The last breath is now on its way—

Dear ones ! Eternal is the glory of Allah !

Ghalib breathed his last on February 15, 1869. "Till the dawn appears and shadows flee !" Funeral arrangements were made under the supervision of Nawab Zia-ud-Din Ahmad Khan and the poet was buried in the vicinity of Sheikh Nizam-ud-Din's tomb, close to Nawab Ilahi Bakhsh Khan Ma'ruf 's grave.

PART II

SELECTED TRANSLATIONS
OF
THE ODES OF GHALIB



THE ODES OF GHALIB

نقش فریادی ہے کس کی شوخی تحریر کا
کاغذی ہے پیرہن ہر پیکر تصویر کا

Against whose artful writing does the Painting
utter a plaintive cry ?

The form of every picture wears a paper-attire.

کا رکا و سخت جانی ہائے تنہائی نہ پوچھہ
صبح کرنا شام کا لانا ہے جوئے شیر کا

Ask not about the diligence of my hard-hearted-
ness in solitude,

To turn the Evening into Morning is to dig the
Canal of Milk !

آگہی دام شنیدن جس قدر چاہے بچھائے
مدعا عنقا ہے اپنے عالم تقریر کا

Cognizance may spread its net of hearing to
any extent,

The Phoenix is the object of our Universe of
Speech.

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بسکہ ہوں غالب اسیری میں بھی آتش زیر پا
 موئے آتش دیدہ ہے حلقہ صری زنجیر کا

O Ghalib ! Whereas even in captivity I have
 my feet on fire,
 The ring of my chain is a hair that hath seen fire!

جز قیس اور کوئی نہ آیا بروئے کار
 صحرا مگر بہ تنگی چشم حسود تھا

Did none other than Qais come to face the task
 (Love)?
 The desert was perhaps as narrow as the eyes
 of the envious !

آشفگی نے نقش سویدا کیا درست
 ظاہر ہوا کہ داغ کا سرمایہ دود تھا

Perturbation set the black mole of the heart
 right;
 Thus it came to light that smoke was the
 wealth of the scar.

تھا خواب میں خیال کو تجھ سے معاملہ
 جب آنکھ کھل گئی تو زیاں تھا نہ سود تھا

In the dream, Fancy had its dealing with
 thee;
 When the eye opened, there was neither loss,
 nor gain !

لینا ہوں مکتبِ غمِ دل میں سبقِ ہنوز
لیکن یہی کہ رفت گیا اور بود تھا

Still I am learning lessons in the school of the
grief of the heart,

But it is only this : that (*raft*) went and (*bud*) was.

دہا نیا کفن نے داغِ عیوب برہنگی
میں ورنہ ہر لباس میں ننگِ وجود تھا

The shroud covered the scar of the defects of
Nudity,

I was, otherwise, in every attire a disgrace to
Existence !

تیشے بغیر مر نہ سکا کوہکنِ اسد
سہرگشتہٴ خمّازِ رسومِ قیود تھا

Asad ! Farhad, the mountain-digger, could not
die without an adze ;

He was only intoxicated with (the wine of)
customs and conventions.

کہتے ہو نہ دینگے ہم دل اگر پتہ پایا
دل کہاں کہ گم کیجے ہم نے مدعا پایا

You say that you would not hand over the
heart, if found lying ;

Where is the heart that we lose? We have
gained your object!

عشق سے طبیعت نے زیست کا مزا پایا
درد کی دوا پائی درد بے دوا پایا

Through love the mind was able to relish life ;
We found a remedy for the pain—a pain with-
out a remedy.

دوستدار دشمن ہے اعتماد دل معلوم
اہ بے اثر دیکھی نالہ نارسا پایا

It is friendly towards the foe, can't rely on the
Heart—
The sigh has proved without effect and the cry
of little avail.

سادگی و پرکاری بیخودی و ہشیاری
حسن کو تغافل میں جرات آزما پایا

Simplicity, skilfulness, ecstasy and wakefulness—
Beauty, in its languor, has been found testing
the (lover's) daring.

غنچہ پھر لگا کھلے آج ہم نے اپنا دل
خون کیا ہوا دیکھا کم کیا ہوا پایا

The bud is going to blossom again ; to-day we
saw
Our heart turned into blood—having lost it,
found it.

حال دل نہیں معلوم لیکن اس قدر یعنی
ہم نے بارہا دہونڈھا تمنے بارہا پایا

The condition of the heart is not known, but
only that
We searched for it many a time—you found
it many a time.

دل مرا سوز نہاں سے بے صعا با جل گیا
آتش خاموش کی مانند گویا جل گیا

My heart has been openly consumed by the
inner burning;
Like a silent fire, one would say, it has been
(completely) burnt.

دل میں ذوق وصل و یاد یار تک باقی نہیں
آگ اس گھر میں لگی ایسی کہ جو تھا جل گیا

In the heart there remains not even the desire
for union, nor the Friend's memory;
This house ght such a fire that it burned all
therein.

میں عدم سے بھی پرے ہوں ورنہ غافل بارہا
میری آہ آتشیں سے بال عذقا جل گیا

I am beyond Non-existence ; otherwise, O
unmindful! many times,
The wing of the Phoenix caught fire from my
fiery sigh.

عرض کیجئے جوہر اندیشہ کی گرمی کہاں
کچھ خیال آیا تھا وحشت کا کہ صحرا جل گیا

Where am I to present the heat of the essence
of thought ?

With the mere thought of wildness, the *Sahara*
has become all ashes.

دل نہیں تجھ کو دکھاتا ورگلا داغوں کی بہار
اس چراغاں کا کروں کیا کارفرما جل گیا

My heart—I do not show you, otherwise, the
spring of scars—

This Illumination, alas ! has lost its ordainer in
fire !

زخم نے داد نہ دی تذگی دل کی یا رب
تیر بھی سینۂ بسمل سے پر افشاں نکلا

The wound did not do justice to the heart,
O God!

بوئے گل، نالہ دل، دود چراغ محفل
جو تری بزم سے نکلا سو پریشاں نکلا

The fragrance of the flower, the cry of the
heart and the smoke of the candle of the
Assembly—

Whoever came out of thy Assembly, came out
perplexed.

تھی نو آموز فنا ہمت دشوار پسند
سخت مشکل ہے کہ یہ کام بھی آسان نکلا

My enterprising spirit was apprenticed in the
first stage of Mortality ;
A great difficulty, even this task has proved so
easy!

دل میں پھر گریہ نے اک شور اُٹھا یا غالب
آہ جو قطرہ نہ نکلا تھا سو طوفان نکلا

In the heart, Lamentation has again created
tumult, O Ghalib!
Alas ! the drop that did not emerge (as a tear),
appeared as a storm.

دھکی میں مر گیا جو نہ باب نبرد تھا
عشق نبرد پیشہ طلبگار مرد تھا

He, who was not equal to the engagement, died
of threat,
The adventurous Love asked for the brave to
come forth.

تھا زندگی میں مرگ کا کھٹکا لگا ہوا
اُڑنے سے پیشتر بھی مرا رنگ زرد تھا

In life-time, there was always the peril of
Death,
Even before death my complexion was pale,
(Ah me!)

تالیف نسخہ ہائے وفا کر رہا تھا میں
مجموعہ خیال ابھی فرد فرد تھا

I was (busy) compiling the treatises of Fidelity
(while)
The compendium of (my) thought was yet
scattered in pieces.

دل تا جگر کہ ساحل دریائے خون ہے اب
اس رگزر میں جلوہ گل آگے گرد تھا

From the heart to the liver, there is now the
bank of the river of blood,
In the past, the splendour of the flower was but
dust in this path.

جاتی ہے کوئی کشمکش اندوہ عشق کی
دل بھی اگر کیا تو وہی دل کا درد تھا

In no case ends the struggle of the grief of
Love ;
Even if the heart was gone, there was the
grief of the heart.

یہ لاش بے کفن اسد خستہ جاں کی ہے
حق مغفرت کرے عجب آزاد مرد تھا

This corpse without-a shroud is—of the broken-
hearted Asad;
God have mercy on him—He was a wonderful
freeman !

بہ فیض ہے دلیٰ نو میدی جاوید آسان ہے
کشائش کو ہمارا عقدہٴ مشکل پسند آیا

Owing to the munificence of heartlessness,
eternal despair is easy ;
Opening has liked the insolubility of our
difficult knot.

ہوائے سیر گل آئینہ ہے مہری قاتل
کہ انداز بظن غلطیدن بسمل پسند آیا

The desire for a stroll amidst flowers is the
mirror of the Assassin's inhumanity;
It interests her (to see) the wounded lover's
rolling in blood.

سبزہٴ خط سے ترا کاکل سرکش نہ دبا
یہ زمرد بھی حریف دم افعی نہ ہو

Thy rebellious lock has not been subdued by
thy *dawn* ;
Even *this* emerald has not proved a rival to the
viper's breath!

میں نے چاہا تھا کہ اندوہ ونا سے چھوڑوں
وہ سنگرمے مرنے پہ بھی راضی نہ ہوا

I had wished to free myself from the grief of
faithfulness;
The cruel beloved was not pleased even with
my being dead.

دل گزرگاہ خیال سے وساعرو ہی سہی
گر نفس چادہ سر منزل تقوی نہ ہوا

Let the heart be a passage for the thought of
wine and cup,
If the breath has not been the high-way of the
destination of purity!

ہوں تو بے وعدہ نہ کرنے میں بھی راضی کہ کبھی
گوش منت کش گلبانگ تسلی نہ ہوا

I am content even if thou dost not make a
promise,
My ear has never been under the obligation
of consolatory words.

سنائش گر ہے زاہد اس قدر جس باغ رضواں کا
وہ اک گلدستہ ہے ہم بیخوردوں کے طاق نسیاں کا

The garden of Ridhwan, which the ascetic
praises so much,
Is but a bouquet of our (wine-bibbers⁵) niche of
oblivion.

نہ آمی سطوت قاتل بھی مانع میرے نالوں کو
لیا دانتوں میں جو تنکا ہوا ریشہ نیستاں کا

The awe of the Assassin did not check my cries,
Any straw that came under my teeth became a
fibre of the reed-forest.

دکھاؤں کا تماشاہ دی اگر فرصت زمانہ نے
مراہر داغ دل اک نغمہ ہے سروچراغاں کا

I will show the *tamasha*, if time permits me—
Every scar of my heart is the seed of the
cypress of Illumination.

کیا آئینہ خانہ کا وہ نقشہ تیرے جلوہ نے
کرے جو پرتو خورشید عالم شبنمستان کا

Thy splendour has brought the same change in
the mirror-house,
As the dazzling light of the sun brings in a dew-
abode.

میری تعمیر میں مضمحل ہے اک صورت خرابی کی
ھیولا برق خرمن کا ہے خون گرم دھقان کا

In my structure there lies concealed a phase of
ruin ;
The *Heyula* of the lightning of the harvest is the
hot blood of the peasant.

خموشی میں نہاں خون گشتہ لاکھوں آرزوئیں ہیں
چراغ مردہ ہوں میں بسے زباں گور غریباں کا

In my silence are hidden millions of desires,
turned into blood—
I am an extinguished candle, mute, at a
stranger's grave !

هنوز اک پرتو نقش خیال یار باقی ہے
دل افسردہ گویا حجرہ ہے یوسف کے زنداں کا

Still there is a ray of the picture of my Friend's
thought;
The sad heart is, in a way, a cell in Joseph's
prison.

بغل میں غیر کی آج آپ سوئے ہیں کہیں ورنہ
سبب کیا خواب میں آکر تبسم ہائے پنہاں کا

Thou hast slept by the side of a stranger some-
where, otherwise,
What is the cause of stealthy smiles, when thou
appearest in my dream ?

محبت تھی چمن سے لیکن اب یہ بے دامنی ہے
کہ موج بوئے گل سے ناک میں آتا ہے دم میرا

I had an attachment to the garden, but now I
have no heart for it—
Now, even the wave of the fragrance of the
flower disturbs me.

سراپا رہن عشق و ناگزیر الفت ہستی
عبادت برق کی کرتا ہوں اور افسوس حاصل کا

I am wholly pledged to Love, and under com-
pulsion attached to Existence—
I am worshipping Lightning, and am sorrowful
for the product.

معصوم نہیں ہے تو ہی نواہائے راز کا
یاں ورنہ جو حجاب ہے پردہ ہے ساز کا

Only thou art not the spouse of the voices of the
Secret;
Otherwise, here what is a veil is the fret of a
musical instrument.

صرفہ ہے ضبط آہ میں پیرا وگرنہ میں
طعم ہوں ایک ہی نفس جاں گداز کا

The restraint of my sigh is to my own
advantage, otherwise, I
Am only one morsel of the soul-melting breath.

کاوش کا دل کرے ہے تقاضا کہ ہے ہنوز
ناخن پہ قرض اس گرہ نیم باز کا

The heart (further) demands digging (effort),
as if still
The nail owes debt to this half-open knot.

Although I am mad, but, why should I be
deceived by (my) friend ?
She holds hidden in her sleeve a dagger, openly
a lance in her hand.

گو نہ سمجھوں اُس کی باتیں گو نہ پاؤں اُسکا بھید
 پر یہ کیا کم ہے کہ مجھ سے وہ پری پیکر کہلا

Although I may not follow her talk, nor may
 discover her secret,
 Yet, is it of little importance that the fairy-faced
 one became free with me ?

ایک ایک قطرہ کا مجھ سے دینا پورا حساب
 خون جگر ودیعت مژگان یار تھا

I had to render account for each drop,
 The blood of the liver was a trust of the
 eyelashes.

اب میں ہوں اور ماتم یک شہر آرزو
 توڑا جو تو نے آئینہ تمثال دار تھا

Now it is—I and the mourning for a whole city
 of longings—
 The mirror (heart), which thou hast broken,
 was full of paintings.

گلیوں میں میری لاش کو کھیلچے پھر وہ کہ میں
 جاں داد ہوائے سر رہ گزار تھا

Now, drag about my corpse in the streets, for, I
 Had devoted my soul to the wayside breeze !

بسکہ دشوار ہے ہر کام کا آسان ہونا
آدمی کو بھی میسر نہیں انسان ہونا

Whereas it is difficult for every task to be easy,
Even man is not able to be Man, (Alas !)

گریہ چاہے ہے خرابی مرے کاشانے کی
دروں کیوار سے تپکے ہے بیابان ہونا

Lamentation desires the desolation of my
abode,
The doors and walls point to my house being
a desert.

لے گئے خاک میں ہم داغ تمنائے نشاط
تو ہو اور آپ بصد رنگ گلستاں ہونا

We carried (with us) under dust the scar of the
longing for joy—
Be thou and ourselves—a rose-garden in a
hundred colours!

کی مرے قتل کے بعد اُس نے جفا سے توبہ
ہائے اُس زود پشیمان کا پشیمان ہونا

After my assassination, she repented of cruelty;
Oh, the regret of that repentant-in-haste !

حیف اس چار گرہ کپڑے کی قسمت غالب
جس کی قسمت میں ہو عاشق کا گریباں ہونا

Ah, the fate of that four *girth* piece of cloth,
O Ghalib!

Which is destined to be a lover's collar !

یک قدم وحشت سے درس دفتر امکاں کہلا
جادہ اجزائے دو عالم دشت کا شیرازہ تھا

A step into the wilderness revealed the lesson
of the Book of Existence :

The path was the binding link of the particles
of the two worlds⁵ desert.

مانع وحشت خرامی ہائے لیلیٰ کون ہے
خانہ مجنون صحرا گرد ہے دروازہ تھا

Who is there to come in the way of Leila's wild
walks ?

The house of Majnun, the wanderer of the
desert, is without a door.

پوچھ مت رسوائی انداز استغنائے حسن
دست مرہون حنا رخسار رہن غازہ تھا

Ask not about the humiliation of the manner of
Beauty's independence—

Hands, consigned to *henna* : the cheeks, mortg-
aged to perfumed powder!

دوست غمخواری میں میری سعی فرمائیں گے کیا
 زہم کے بہرے تلک ناخن نہ بڑھ آئیں گے کیا

What would be the result of my friends' efforts
 —to sympathise with me ?

Till the wound heals, will not (my) nails have
 grown ?

بسے نیازی حد سے گزری بندہ پرور کب تلک
 ہم کہیں گے حال دل اور آپ فرمائیں گے کیا

Indifference has passed its limit, O Mistress,
 how long

Shall we describe the condition of our heart
 and thou shalt say, " What ?"

حضرت ناصح گر آئیں دیدہ و دل فرش راہ
 کوئی مجھہ کو یہ تو سمجھا دو کہہ سمجھائیں گے کیا

If the Adviser comes, (my) eye and heart be
 the floor of his path !

Let me understand as to what he is going to
 make me understand.

آج واں تیغ و کفن باندھے ہوئے جاتا ہوں میں
 عذر میرے قتل کرنے میں وہ اب لائیں گے کیا

I am going there to-day, with a sword and
 shroud;

What excuse will she put forth now to forego
 my assassination ?

گر کیا ناصح نے ہم کو قید اچھا یوں سہی
یہ جنوں عشق کے انداز چہٹ جالیں گے کیا۔

If the Adviser has imprisoned *us*, let it be so ;
But, will these manners of madness of love go ?

خانہ زاد زلف ہین زنجیر سے بھائیں گے کیوں
ہیں گرفتار وفا زنداں سے کہہرائیں گے کیا

We are the born-slaves of thy lock, why run
away from the chain ?
We are bound by faithfulness, why be con-
founded in prison ?

ہے اب اس معمورہ میں قحط نم القوت اسد
ہم نے یہ سنا کہ دلی میں رہیں کہا نہیں گے کیا

O Asad! in this city there is now famine of
the grief of love ;
We admit that we should live in Delhi, but
what to eat ?

یہ نہ تھی ہماری قسمت کہ وصال یار ہوتا
اگر اور جیتے رہتے یہی انتظار ہوتا

It was not our destiny to enjoy our meeting
with the Friend ;
If we had lived more, we would have waited
for the same !

ترے وعدہ پر جئے ہم تو یہ جان جھوٹ جانا
کہ خوشی سے مر نہ جائے اگر اعتبار ہوتا

If we lived on thy promise, know that we had
known it false—

For, should we not have died of joy, if we could
believe ?

غم اگر چہ جاں گسل ہے پہ کہاں بچیں کہ دل ہے
غم عشق گر نہ ہوتا غم روزگار ہوتا

Although grief is soul-breaking, but how is the
heart to escape ?

If there were no grief of love, there would have
been worldly grief.

کہوں کس سے میں کہ کیا ہے شب غم بری بلا ہے
مجھ سے کیا برا تھا مرنا اگر ایک بار ہوتا

To whom should I say what the night of
grief is ? It is a trial—

Dying was nothing bad for me, if it were but
once !

ہوئے مر کے ہم جو رسوا ہوئے کیوں نہ غرق دریا
نہ کبھی جنازہ اٹھتا نہ کہیں مزار ہوتا

We have been humiliated by being dead—why
were we not drowned in a river ?

There would have been neither a funeral pro-
cession, nor a grave!

ہوس کو ہے نشاط کار کیا کیا
 نہ ہو مرنا تو جینے کا مزا کیا

How numerous are the ways in which Desire
 seeks pleasure, indeed!

If there be no death, what would be the attrac-
 tion of life ?

فروغ شعلہ خس یک نفس ہے
 ہوس کو پاس ناموس وفا کیا

The light of the flame of the straw is but for a
 moment—

What regard has lust for the dignity of Faith ?

نفس موج محیط بیخودی ہے
 تغافل ہائے ساقی کا گلا کیا

The breath is (now) a wave of the ocean of
 trance—

To complain against the inattention of the
 Saki—(who) and what ?

دماغ عطر پیراھن نہیں ہے
 غم آوارگی ہائے صبا کیا

(I) have no heart for the ottar of the mantle
 (of the beloved),

What anxiety can there be about the wander-
 ings of the zephyr ?

The heart of every drop is a musical instrument
of " I am the Ocean !"
We are His, one need not ask about us !

What is the obstacle ? I am responsible, look
this side!
There is no blood-money for the martyrs of
(thy) glance.

Hear, O destroyer of the commodity of Faith,
hear !
What is the sound of the " breaking" of the
price of (my) heart ?

Even in devotion we are so free and self-
respecting that we
Retraced our footsteps, if the door of the Kaaba
was not opened.

سینہ کا داغ ہے وہ فالہ کہ لب تک نہ گیا
 خاک کا رزق ہے وہ قطرہ کہ دریا نہ ہوا

The cry that did not reach the lip is the scar of
 the breast:

The drop that did not become a river is the
 subsistence of dust.

نام کا میرے ہے وہ دکھ کہ کسی کو نہ ملا
 کام میں میرے ہے وہ فتنہ کہ برپا نہ ہوا

There is suffering in store for me which none
 has seen :

Mischief is after me which has never appeared.

زکات حسن دے اے جلوۂ بینش کہ مہر آسا
 چراغ خانۂ درویش ہو کاسہ کدائی کا

Give alms out of thy beauty, O splendour of
 vision! so that like the sun,

The beggar's bowl may become the candle of
 the Dervish's abode !

وہی اک بات ہے جو یاں نفس وار نکھس گل ہے
 چمن کا جلوہ با عشا ہے مری رنگین نوائی کا

It is the same thing—what is breath here is the
 perfume of the flower there—

The splendour of the garden is the cause of my
 colourful songs.

سب کے دل میں ہے جگہ تیری جو تو راضی ہوا
مجھ پہ گویا اک زمانہ مہرباں ہو جائے گا

Thou hast attraction for every heart, if thou be
pleased with me,
One might say, a world would be kind to me,

باغ میں مجھ کو نہ لے جا ورنہ میرے حال پر
ہر گل تر ایک چشم خوں فشاں ہو جائے گا

Take me not to the garden, otherwise, at
my sight
Every bedewed flower would become a blood-
sprinkling eye.

درد منت کش دوا نہ ہوا
میں نہ اچھا ہوا برا نہ ہوا

Pain did not incur the obligation of medicine—
I did not get well—it was nothing bad !

جان دی، دی ہوئی اسی کی تھی
حق تو یہ ہے کہ حق ادا نہ ہوا

I gave my life; it was given by Him,
The truth is that (He) was not truly repaid.

یہ جانتا ہوں کہ تو اور پاسخِ مکتوب
مگر ستم زدہ ہوں ذوقِ خامہ فرسا کا

I know that—thou and the answer of the
letter...

But I am under the tyranny of the writing
mania.

حنائے پائے خزاں ہے بہار اگر ہے یہی
دوامِ کلفتِ خاطر ہے عیشِ دنیا کا

It is *henna* of the Autumn's foot, if this is Spring,
The pleasure of this world is the perennial
distress of the heart.

گھر ہمارا جو نہ روئے بھی تو ویراں ہوتا
بھر گر بھر نہ ہوتا تو بیاباں ہوتا

Our abode, even if we had not shed tears,
would have been desolate—

The ocean, if it were not an ocean—would have
been a desert.

بعد یک عمر ورجِ بار تو دیتا بارے
کاش رضواں ہی دریاں کا درباں ہوتا

After a whole life of devotion, he should have
allowed me entrance;

Would that the Ridhwan were the *darban* of
(my) friend's door !

نہ تھا کچھ تو خدا تھا، کچھ نہ ہوتا تو خدا ہوتا
 نہ ہوتا مجھ کو ہونے نے نہ ہوتا میں تو کیا ہوتا

When there was nothing, there was God; if
 there were nothing there would have been God :
 My being has drowned me ; if I were not, what
 would—have been ?

بے مے سے کسے ہے طاقت آشوب آگہی
 کہینچا ہے عجز حوصلہ نے خط ایام کا

Without wine, who has the power to face the
 disorder of cognizance ?
 The humility of courage has drawn the lines of
 the cup.

سو بار بند عشق سے آزاد ہم ہوئے
 پر کیا کریں کہ دل ہی عدو ہے فراغ کا

A hundred times we were freed from the
 bondage of love,
 But what to do ? The heart is the enemy of
 freedom !

پھر مجھے دیدہ تریاں آیا
 دل جگر تشنہ فریاں آیا

Again I thought of my tearful eye,
 The heart and the liver are inclined to cry.

دم لیا تھا نہ قیامت نے ہنوز
پھر ترا وقت سفر یاد آیا

The great Resurrection had not yet paused a
while—

Again (I) thought of the time of thy departure.

زندگی یوں بھی گزر ہی جاتی
کیوں تسرا راہ گزر یاد آیا

Life would have passed, even in that way,
Why had I to remember thy path ?

کوئی ویرانی سی ویرانی ہے
دشت کو دیکھ کے گھر یاد آیا

Oh, what a deserted place ! An awful waste !
At the sight of the desert, I thought of my
abode.

تم سے بے جا ہے مجھے اپنی تباہی کا گلہ
اس میں کچھہ شائبہ خوبی تقدیر بھی تھا

It is out of place for me to complain to you
about my ruin,
In it there was just a trace of my good luck as
well.

تو مجھے بھول گیا ہو تو پتہ بتلا دوں
 کبھی فلزاک میں تیرے کوئی نچھپر بھی تھا

Thou mayest have forgotten me, I might tell
 thee—
 There was once a victim attached to thy saddle-
 straps !

بجلی اک کوند گئی آنکھوں کے آگے تو کیا
 بات کرے کہ میں لب تشنہٴ تسقریر بھی تھا

If there be just a flash of lightning, what
 then?
 She should have talked as I had lips thirsty for
 speech as well.

لب خشک در تشنگی مردگان کا
 زیارت کدہ ہوں دل آزر دگان کا

I am the "dry lip" of those who died of thirst :
 I am the resort of the troubled-in-mind.

ہمہ نا امیدی، ہمہ بدگمانی
 میں دل ہوں فریب وفا خوردگان کا

All disappointment, all suspicion—
 I am the heart of the deluded-by-faith.

توفیق باندازہ ہمت ہے ازل سے
آنکھوں میں ہے وہ قطرہ کہ گوہر نہ ہوا تھا

Divine grace is in accordance with the measure
of courage since *Azal*—

In (my) eyes there is a drop which did not
become a pearl.

جب تک کہ نہ دیکھا تھا قد یار کا عالم
میں معتقد فتنہ معشر نہ ہوا تھا

As long as I had not viewed my friend's stature,
I had not believed in the mischief of the
Resurrection.

دریائے معاصی تنگ آبی سے ہوا خشک
میرا سر دامن بھی ابھی تر نہ ہوا تھا

The river of sins became dry on account of the
shortage of water,
Even the end of my skirt had not yet been
moist.

آئینہ دیکھ اپنا سا منہ لے کے رہ گئے
صاحب کو دل نہ دینے پہ کتنا غرور تھا

Having seen the mirror, she had to blush and
blush—
How proud was the Damsel not to give her
heart.

عرض نیاز عشق کے قابل نہیں رہا
جس دل پہ ناز تھا مجھے وہ دل نہیں رہا

I am not in a position now to offer the humility
of love—

The heart I was proud of—that heart is no
more!

جاتا ہوں داغ حسرت ہستی لٹے ہوئے
ہوں شمع کشتہ در خور محفل نہیں رہا

I am going—taking with me the scar of the
unfulfilled desire for Existence,

I am an extinguished candle—am not worthy
of the Assembly.

مرنے کی اے دل اور ہی تدبیر کر کہ میں
شایان دست و خنجر قاتل نہیں رہا

Oh Heart! think of another plan, for I

Am no more worthy of the hand and arm of
the Assassin.

گو میں رہا رہیں ستم ہائے روزگار
لیکن ترے خیال سے غافل نہیں رہا

Although I have been subjected to the cruelties
of Time,

Yet, have I never been indifferent to thy
thought.

کوہن نقاش یک تمثال شیریں تھا اسد
سنگ سے سرما کر ہووے نہ پیدا آشنا

Farhad, the mountain-digger, was a painter of
Shirin's portrait—a sculptor,
By striking one's head against stone, none can
create a friend !

منظر اک بلندی پر اور ہم بنا سکتے
عرش سے ادھر ہوتا کاشکے مکان اپنا

We could have created another Spectacle on
high,
Would that our house were on the other side
of the 'Arsh!

درد دل لکھوں کب تک جاؤں ان کو دکھاؤں
انگلیاں نگار اپنی خاصہ خونچکاں اپنا

How long shall I write about the pain of my
heart ? I should go and show her
My wounded fingers and my bleeding pen.

ہم کہاں کے دانا تھے کس ہنر میں یکتا تھے
بے سبب ہوا غالب دشمن آسمان اپنا

We were not so wise, nor unique in any art,
For no cause, O Ghalib ! the sky has become
our foe.

سرمۂ مفت نظر ہوں مری قیمت یہ ہے
کہ رہے چشم خریدار پہ احسان میرا

I am the collyrium of sight—to be had *gratis* ;
my price is
That the eye of the buyer be obligated to me.

بزم قدح سے عیش تمنا نہ رکھ کہ رنگ
صید ز دام جستہ ہے اس دام گناہ کا

Expect not joy from the Assembly of the Gup,
for, colour
Is a victim that has escaped this snare-spot.

رحمت اگر قبول کرے کیا بعید ہے
شرمندگی سے عذر نہ کرنا گناہ کا

If His mercy accepts—it is nothing impossible—
My putting forth no excuse for sin, out of
shame !

رات دن گردش میں ہیں سات آسمان
ہو رہیگا کچھ نہ کچھ گہرائیں کیا

Day and night, the seven skies are revolving—
Something must happen, why be confused ?

لاگ ہو تو اُس کو ہم سمجھیں لگاؤ
جب نہ ہو کچھ بہی تو دھوکا کھائیں کیا

If there be enmity, we would take it for con-
nection,
But, if there be nothing, how to be deceit-
fooled ?

عشرت قطرہ ہے دریا میں فنا ہو جانا
درد کا حد سے گزرنا ہے دوا ہو جانا

The pleasure (life) of the drop is to perish in
the river :
To exceed its limit is to be its remedy for pain.

ضعف سے گریہ مبدل بہ دم سرد ہوا
باور آیا ہمیں پانی کا ہوا ہو جانا

Due to weakness, the cry has been changed to
cold breath ;
We now believe that water takes the form of air.

دود کو آج اُس کے ماتم میں سیہ پوشی ہوئی
وہ دل سوزاں کہ کل تک شمع ماتم خانہ تھا

Smoke is to-day mourning in black the same—
That burning heart which, till yesterday, was
the candle of the mourning-abode.

مند گئیں کھولتے ہی کھولتے آنکھیں غالب
یار لائے مری بالیں پہ اسے پر کس وقت

My eyes were closed just in an effort to see,
My friends brought her by my head-side—What
a time !

نفس نہ انجمن آرزو سے باہر کھینچ
اگر شراب نہیں انظار ساغر کھینچ

Do not draw breath outside the Assembly of
Desire,
If there is no wine, wait for the cup!

تری طرف ہے بہ حسرت نظارہ نرگس
بکوری دل و چشم رقیب ساغر کھینچ

The narcissus looks on at you with regret,
Quaff the cup to the blindness of the heart and
eye of the rival!

شمع بجھتی ہے تو اس میں سے دھواں اُٹھتا ہے
شعلہ عشق سیہ پوش ہوا میرے بعد

When the candle is extinguished, the smoke
rises from it;
The flame of love is mourning in black—after I
am no more.

خوں ہے دل خاک میں احوال بتاں پر یعنی
 اُن کے ناخن ہوئے محتاج حنا میرے بعد

In dust, my heart is turned to blood, in view
 of the end of idols (Beauty);
 Their nails are in need of *henna* after I am no
 more.

نہیں ہے سایہ کہ سن کر نوید مقدم یار
 گئے ہیں چند قدم پیشتر درودیوار

It is not the shadow—but hearing the news
 of the Friend's coming,
 The doors and walls have moved a few steps
 forward !

نظر میں کھٹکے ہے بن تیرے گھر کی آبادی
 ہمیشہ روتے ہیں ہم دیکھ کر درودیوار

Without thee the prosperity of (my) abode
 rankles in my eyes ;
 We always weep at the sight of (our) doors
 and walls.

مقصد ہے ناز و غمزہ ولے گفتگو میں کام
 چلتا نہیں ہے دشنہ و خنجر کہے بغیر

The object is grace and coquetry, but in
 speech
 Expression is not possible *sans* words—poniard
 and dagger.

ہر چند ہو مشاہدۂ حق کی گفتگو
بنتی نہیں ہے بادہ و ساغر کہے بغیر

Although speech may relate to the observation
of God's beauty—
The sense cannot be expressed *sans* words—wine
and cup.

کیوں جل گیا نہ تاب رخ-یار دیکھ کر
جلتا ہوں اپنی طاقت دیدار دیکھ کر

Why, was I not burnt up, before the glow of
my Friend's lustrous face ?
It pains me to see that my vision is strong.

ان آبلوں سے پاؤں کسے گھبرا گیا تھا میں
جی خوش ہوا ہے راہ کو پر خار دیکھ کر

I had been troubled to see the blisters of my
feet—
My heart is pleased to see the path strewn
with thorns.

گرنی تھی ہم پہ برق تجلی نہ طور پر
دیتے ہیں بادہ ظرف قدح خوار دیکھ کر

The lightning of God's splendour should have
overtaken us, for,
They dispense wine according to the capacity
of a drunkard.

فنا تعلیم درس بیخودی ہوں اُس زمانے سے
کہ مجنوں لام الف لکھتا تھا دیوار دبستان پر

I have been taught mortality by the teachings
of selflessness since—

Majnu was yet writing "L—A" on the wall of
the school.

بجز پرواز شوق ناز کیا باقی رہا ہوگا
قیامت اک ہوائے تندھے خاک شہیداں پر

Except the eager flight to see the graceful
Friend, what would there be ?

The Resurrection is—a violent wind (blowing)
over the dust of martyrs.

یا رب وہ نہ سمجھے ہیں نہ سمجھیں گے سری بات
دے اور دل ان کو جو نہ دے مجھ کو زباں اور

O God! she has neither understood me, nor
will she understand ;
Give some other heart to her, if I cannot be
given another tongue !

تم شہر میں ہو تو ہمیں کیا غم جب اُٹھیں گے
لے آئیں گے بازار سے جا کر دل و جاں اور

If you are in the city, no anxiety can arise,
For (we) can fetch from the bazaar another
heart and soul.

ہر چند سبکدست ہوئے بت شکنی میں
ہم ہیں تو ابھی راہ میں ہیں سنگ گراں اور

Although we have become expert iconoclasts,
While we exist, there are still heavy stones in
our way.

لوگوں کو ہے خورشید جہاں تاب کا دھوکا
ہر روز دکھاتا ہوں میں اک داغ نہاں اور

The people mistake it for a world-lightening sun,
But (in fact) I show daily a new secret scar.

نہ کی سامان عیش و جاہ نے تدبیر و حشمت کی
ہوا جام زمرد بھی مجھے داغ پلنگ آخر

The worldly lure of pleasure and position did not
check my wildness,
For, even the emerald cup became the leopard's
spot for me, at last.

اسد بسمل ہے کس انداز کا قاتل سے کہتا ہے
تو عشق ناز کر خون دو عالم میری گردن پر

Of what nature is Asad, the wounded lover who
says to the Assassin,
"Carry on your practices, my neck is responsible
for the blood of the two worlds !" ?

فارغ مجھے نہ جان کہ مانند صبح و مہر
 ہے داغ عشق زینت حیب کفن ہنوز

Think not I am free, because like the morning
 sun,
 The scar of love still adds beauty to the *giriban*
 of my shroud.

آہ کو چاہئے اک عمر اثر ہونے تک
 کون جیتا ہے تری زلف کے سر ہونے تک

My Sigh requires long years to have effect—
 Who will live till thy tresses are conquered ?

دام ہر موج میں ہے حلقہ صد کام نہنگ
 دیکھیں کیا گزرے ہے قطرہ پہ گہر ہونے تک

In the snare of every wave is a loop of a
 hundred crocodiles;
 See what happens to the drop till it turns into a
 pearl !

ہم نے مانا کہ تغافل نہ کرو گے لیکن
 خاک ہو جائیں گے ہم تمکو خبر ہونے تک

We admit that you will not show to us inatten-
 tion, but,
 We shall be dust long before you really know it.

پرتو خور سے ہے شبلم کو فنا کی تعلیم
میں بھی ہوں ایک عنایت کی نظر ہونے تک

Dew learns the lesson of mortality from the
sun—

I only exist—till you cast a kindly glance !

غم نہیں ہوتا ہے آزادوں کو بیش از یک نفس
برق سے کرتے ہیں روشن شمع ماتم خانہ ہم

Freemen suffer grief for not more than a
noment—

With lightning we light up the candle of our
mourning-abode.

مجھ کو دیار غیر میں مارا وطن سے دور
رکھ لی مرے خدا نے صری بیکیسی کی شرم

Death overtook me in a foreign country, away
from my native land;

God has saved me the shame of friendlessness.

اگاتے وقتوں کے ہیں یہ لوگ انہیں کچھ نہ کہو
جو سے و نغمہ کو اندوہ ربا کہتے ہیں

Those who call wine and song dispellers-of-grief,
Belong to the old times; say not anything to
them !

ہے پرے سرحد ادراک سے اپنا مسجود
قبلہ کو اہل نظر قبلہ نما کہتے ہیں

Beyond the limit of perception is our object of
adoration;'
People of vision call Kaaba the sign-post to
Kaaba.

رونق ہستی ہے عشق خانہ ویراں ساز سے
انجمن بے شمع ہے گر برق خرمین میں نہیں

The splendour of Existence is due to the devas-
tating (effect of) Love;
The Assembly is without a candle, when lightn-
ing is not in the harvest.

مہرباں ہو کے بلا لو مجھے چاہو جس وقت
میں گیا وقت نہیں ہوں کہ پھر آ بھی نہ سکوں

Be kind to call me at any time (you please)—
I am not the time past—that I cannot return.

ضعف میں طعنہ اغیار کا شکوہ کیا ہے
بات کچھہ سر تو نہیں ہے کہ اُٹھا بھی نہ سکوں

When in weakness, why complain against the
reproach of strangers ?
A word is nothing like a head that I may not
lift.

زھر ملتا ہی نہیں صحیحہ کو ستمگر ورنہ
کیا قسم ہے ترے ملنے کی کہ کہا بھی نہ سکوں

I do not find poison, O tyrant! or else
Is it 'the oath of thy meeting' that I could not
take?

نغمہ ہائے غم کو بھی اے دل غنیمت جانئے
بے صدا ہو جائیگا یہ ساز ہستی ایک دن

Value even the songs of grief, O heart !
This instrument of Existence shall be still one
day !

بوسہ نہیں نہ دیجئے دشنام ہی سہی
آخر زباں تو رکھتے ہو تم گر دھاں نہیں

If you cannot give a kiss, don't, let it be abuse,
You have at least a tongue, if not a mouth !

ہے ننگ سینہ دل اگر آتشکدہ نہ ہو
ہے عار دل نفس اگر آذر فشاں نہیں

If it is not a fire-place, the heart is an insult to
the chest:
The breath is a shame for the heart, when it
does not scatter sparks.

رنجِ نومیدئی جاوید گوارا رہیو
خوش ہوں گر نالہ زبونی کش تاثیر نہیں

O anguish of eternal despair ! Be thou ever agreeable !

I will be happy, if wailing does not suffer the insult of effect.

سلطنت دست بدست آئی ہے
جام سے خاتم جمشید نہیں

Kingdom has passed from hand to hand;
The cup of wine is not the ring of Jamshid.

رازِ معشوق نہ رسوا ہو جائے
ورنہ مرجانے میں کچھ بہید نہیں

Lest the secret of the Sweetheart should be betrayed—
In dying, otherwise, secret there is none !

کہتے ہیں جیتے ہیں امید پہ لوگ
ہم کو جینے کی بھی امید نہیں

'Tis said, the people live on hope;
We cannot even hope to live.

تا پھر نہ انتظار میں نیند آئے عمر بھر
 آنے کا عہد کر گئے آئے جو خواب میں

That I may not sleep again for all my life—
 waiting,
 She promised to come, when she came in a
 dream.

قاصد کے آئے آئے خط اک اور لکھ رکھوں
 میں جانتا ہوں جو وہ لکھیں گے جواب میں

Till the messenger returns, let me write an-
 other letter,
 I know what the Sweetheart will write in
 reply.

مجھ تک کب آن کی بزم میں آتا تھا دور جام
 ساقی نے کچھ ملا نہ دیا ہو شراب میں

How could the cup approach me in her
 Assembly,
 If the Saki had not drugged the wine ?

کل کے لئے کر آج نہ خست شراب میں
 یہ سوہ ظن ہے ساقی کوثر کے باب میں

Show not parsimony to-day in wine, for the
 morrow—
 It is evil-thinking in respect of the Saki of
Kauthar.

ہیں آج کیوں ذلیل کہ کل تک نہ تھی پسند
گستاخی فرشتہ ہماری جناب میں

Why are we humiliated to-day? Till yesterday,
we did not brook
The impertinence of an angel in regard to our
dignity.

جاں کیوں نکلنے لگتی ہے تن سے دم سماع
گر وہ صدا سوائی ہے چنگ و رباب میں

Why does the soul part with the body at the
sound of music,
If that sound is dormant in the lute and rebeck?

رو میں ہے رخس عمر کہاں دیکھئے تمہے
نہ ہاتھ باگ پر ہے نہ پاہے رکاب میں

The Rakhsh of life is going apace, let's see
where it stops,
We have neither our hand on the rein, nor the
foot in the stirrup.

آرائش جمال سے فارغ نہیں ہنوز
پیش نظر ہے آئینہ دائم نقاب میں

The beloved is not yet free from the adorn-
ment of beauty;
(She) holds always in front a mirror under
her veil.

حیراں ہوں دل کو روؤں کہ پیٹوں جگر کو میں
مقدور ہو تو ساتھ رکھوں نوحہ گر کو میں

I wonder whether I should bewail the heart or
mourn the liver—

If I could, I would keep a mourner with me.

چھوڑا نہ رشک نے کہ ترے گھر کا نام لوں
ہر اک سے پوچھتا ہوں کہ جاؤں کدھر کو میں

Envy did not allow me to disclose thy abode—
I ask every one, "Whither should I go?"

چلتا ہوں تھوڑی دور ہر اک تیز روکے ساتھ
پہچانتا نہیں ہوں ابھی راہبر کو میں

I go a few steps along with every one who
walks fast—

I do not yet recognise the guide, (Ah me !)

اپنے پہ کر رہا ہوں قیاس اہل دہر کا
سمجھا ہوں دلپذیر متاع ہنر کو میں

I consider the people of the world to be like
myself:

I take the valuables of Art to be agreeable.

شاہد ہستی مطلق کی کمر ہے عالم
لوگ کہتے ہیں کہ ہے پر ہمیں منظور نہیں

The Universe is the waist of the beloved of
Absolute Existence—
They say that it is, but, we neither see nor
accept it.

قطرہ اپنا بھی حقیقت میں ہے دریا لیکن
ہم کو تقلید تک ظرفی منصور نہیں

Our own drop, too, is in reality a river, but,
We do not like to imitate Mansur in his
shallowness.

عشق و مزدوری عشرت گہ خسرو کیا خوب
ہم کو تسلیم نکونامی فرہاد نہیں

Love and labour in the pleasure-palace of
Chosroe, amazing !
We do not recognise the good name of Farhad.

اہل بینش کو ہے طوفان حوادث مکتب
لطمہ موج کم از سیلی استاد نہیں

For the people of vision, the storm of accidents
is a school—
The impact of a wave is not less than the
teacher's slap.

دونوں جہان دیکے وہ سمجھے کہ خوش رہا
یاں ا پڑی یہ شرم کہ تکرار کیا کریں

Having bestowed the two worlds (upon me),
they thought I was pleased,
While modesty came in my way—why dispute ?

ہیں زوال آمادہ اجزا آفرینش کے تمام
مہر گردوں ھے چراغ رہگزار باد یاں

All the particles of Creation are on the way to
decline ;
The sun of the sky is here a candle in the
passage of the wind.

یہ ہم جو ہجر میں دیواروں کو دیکھتے ہیں
کبھی صبا کو کبھی نامہ بر کو دیکھتے ہیں

We are looking, in her absence, at the walls
and doors ; the fact is—
(We are) sometimes looking for the zephyr and
sometimes for the courier.

وہ آئیں گھر میں ہمارے خدا کی قدرت ھے
کبھی ہم ان کو کبھی اپنے گھر کو دیکھتے ہیں

Her arrival at our abode—divine power !
We sometimes look at her and sometimes at our
abode.

نہیں کہ مجھ کو قیامت کا اعتقاد نہیں
شب فراق سے روز جزا زیاد نہیں

No, it is not that I don't believe in the Day of
Resurrection;
The Day of Judgment is not longer than the
night of separation !

تیسری سرعت کے مقابل اے عمر!
برق کو پا بہ فنا باندھتے ہیں

As opposed to thy leisure, O Life !
They describe lightning as having hennaed feet.

دائم پڑا ہوا ترے در پر نہیں ہوں میں
خاک ایسی زندگی پہ کہ پتھر نہیں ہوں میں

I am *not* lying at thy threshold for all time—
Dust be upon this life, I am not even a stone !

کیوں گردشِ مدام سے گھبرا نہ جائے دل؟
انسان ہوں پیالہ و ساغر نہیں ہوں میں

Why should not the heart be confounded by
constant circulation ?
I am man (after all)—neither cup nor goblet.

یا رب زمانہ مجھ کو مٹاتا ہے کس لئے
 لوح جہاں پہ حرف مکرر نہیں ہوں میں

O God ! why does Time efface me ?

On the tablet of the Universe, I am not a
 word, reiterated.

حد چاہئے سزا میں عقوبت کے واسطے
 آخر گناہگار ہوں کافر نہیں ہوں میں

There should be a limit to punishment, in
 order to chastise,
 After all, I am a sinner and not an infidel.

سب کہاں کچھ لالہ و گل میں نمایاں ہو گئیں
 خاک میں کیا صورتیں ہونگی کہ پنہاں ہو گئیں

Not all, but some have appeared as tulips and
 roses,
 Much beauty must there be concealed in the
 earth !

یاد تھیں ہم کو بھی رنگارنگ بزم آرائیاں
 لیکن اب نقش و نگار طاق نسیاں ہو گئیں

We had also in memory many-hued pleasures,
But, now they have become paintings in the
 niche of oblivion.

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جو اے خون آنکھوں سے بہنے دو کہ ہے شام فراق
میں یہ سمجھوں گا کہ شمعیں دو فروزاں ہو گئیں

Let the stream of blood flow from my eyes, for,
it is the evening of separation—

I would conceive that two candles have been
illuminated.

نیند اس کی ہے دماغ اس کا ہے راتیں اُسکی ہیں
تیری زلفیں جس کے بازو پر پریشاں ہو گئیں

Sleep is his, mind is his and nights are his—
On whose arm thy locks have been dishevelled !

جان فزا ہے بادہ جس کے ہاتھ میں جام آ گیا
لکیریں ہاتھ کی گویا رگ جاں ہو گئیں

Wine is life-giving—whoever happens to hold
the cup,

All the lines of his hand, one would say, have
become the veins of his soul.

رنج سے خوگر ہوا انساں تو مت جاتا ہے رنج
مشکلیں مجھ پہ پڑیں اتنی کہ آساں ہو گئیں

If man be accustomed to grief—then grief is
effaced—

The excess of difficulties made the difficulties
light for me.

دیوانگی سے دوش پہ زنا رہی نہیں
یعنی ہماری جیب میں اک تار بھی نہیں

Owing to distraction, even the sacred thread
is not on our shoulder;

That is—our *giriban* has not even a thread !

دل کو نیاز حسرت دیدار کر چکے
دیکھا تو ہم میں طاقت دیدار بھی نہیں

The heart has been made a sacrifice to the
longing for Vision—

We saw (at length) we had not even the
capacity to see.

شوریدگی کے ہاتھ سے سرھے وبال دوش
صحرا میں اے خدا کوئی دیوار بھی نہیں

On account of dejection, the head is a burden
for the shoulders;

In the desert, O God ! there is not even a wall !

دل میں ہے یار کی صف مڑگاں سے روکشی
حالانکہ طاقت خلش خار بھی نہیں

The heart intends to come into conflict with
the Friend's eyelashes,

While it has not the capacity to suffer **the**
prick of a thorn !

دل ہی تو ہے نہ سنگ و خشت درد سے بہر نہ آئے کیوں
روئیں گے ہم ہزار بار کوئی ہمیں ستائے کیوں

It is the heart, not stone or brick—why should
it not feel pain ?

We would weep a thousand times, why should
any one tease us ?

دیر نہیں حرم نہیں در نہیں آستان نہیں
بیٹھے ہیں رہ گزر پہ ہم غیر ہمیں آتھائے کیوں

It is neither temple, nor Haram : neither door,
nor threshold ;

We are sitting by the wayside, why should one
ask us to move ?

قید حیات و بند غم اصل میں دونوں ایک ہیں
موت سے پہلے آدمی غم سے نجات پائے کیوں

The bondage of life, the fetter of grief—in
reality the two are one ;

Before death, how could man attain salvation
from grief?

ہوں گرمی نشاط تصور سے نغمہ سنج
میں عندلیب گلشن ناآفریدہ ہوں

The heat of the pleasure of imagination makes
me sing—

I am the nightingale of the garden which is yet
to be !

حسد سے دل اگر افسردہ ہے گرم تماشا ہو
کہ چشم تنگ شاید کثرت نظارہ سے وا ہو

From narrowness of vision, the heart becomes
frigid, so seek heat in seeing !
So that the narrow eye may be opened by the
abundance of view.

کعبہ میں جا رہا تو نہ دو طعنہ کیا کہیں
بھولا ہوں حق صحبت اہل کنشت کو

If I moved to the Kaaba, don't taunt me, for,
have I
Forgotten the people of the Fire-Temple and
(the claims of their company) ?

طاعت میں تا رہ نہ مے وانگیں کی لاک
دوزخ میں دال دو کوئی لے کر بہشت کو

So that in the worship (of God) there may be
no impurity of wine or honey,
Let someone (for God's sake) throw Paradise
into Hell!

وارستہ اس سے ہیں کہ صحبت ہی کیوں نہ ہو
کیجے ہمارے ساتھ عداوت ہی کیوں نہ ہو

We are free from this—even if it be love;
Carry on the connection with us—even if it
be ill-will!

دالا نہ بی کسی نے کسی نے معاملہ
اپنے سے کہینچتا ہوں خجالت ہی کیوں نہ ہو

Friendlessness did not allow me to deal with
any one,
I derive from myself, even if it be shame !

ہے آدمی بجائے خود ایک معشر خیال
ہم انجمن سمجھتے ہیں خلوت ہی کیوں نہ ہو

Man by himself is a Resurrection of thought—
We take it for an Assembly, even if it be
privacy.

مٹتا ہے فوت فرصت ہستی کا غم کہیں
عمر عزیز صرف عبادت ہی کیوں نہ ہو

How can the grief for the loss of time in life
be effaced ?
Even if the precious life be spent in devotion !

خدا سرمالے ہاتھوں کو کہ رکھتے ہیں کشاکش میں
کبھی میوے گریباں کو کبھی جاناں کے دامن کو

May God put the hands to shame that keep in
struggle-
One time my *giriban*, another the skirt of
(my) beloved!

خوشی کیا کہیں پر میرے اگر سو بار ابر آوے
سمجھتا ہوں کہ دھونڈے ہے ابھی سے برق خرمین کو

What is the joy, if the pearl-sprinkling cloud
visits my farm ?
I understand that lightning is only looking for
the harvest.

وفاداری بشرط استواری اصلِ ایماں ہے
مرے بتخانہ میں تو کعبہ میں گاڑو برہمن کو

Faithfulness with the condition of stability is the
root of Faith;
If the Brahman breathes his last in the idol-
house, O, bury him in the Kaaba !

دھوتا ہوں جب میں پیئے کو اُس سیمتن کے پائو
رکھتا ہے ضد سے کہینچ کر باہر لگن کے پائو

When I wash the feet of my silver-bodied
beloved in order to taste the Nectar,
She wilfully removes her feet out of the basin.

واں اُس کو ہولِ دل ہے تو یاں میں ہوں شرمسار
یعنی یہ میری آہ کی تاثیر سے نہ ہو

If she is terrified there, I am ashamed here,
Lest her terror be due to the effect of my sigh!

تم جانو تم کو غیر سے جو رسم و راء ہو
مجہہ کو بھی پوچھتے رہو تو کیا گناہ ہو

Your 'customs and ways' with the stranger are
best known to you ;
But if you ask about me, it would be no sin.

بچتے نہیں مواخذہ روز حشر سے
قاتل اگر رقیب ہے تو تم گواہ ہو

We must render account on the Day of Judgment
If the Assassin is the rival, thou art the witness.

کیا وہ بھی بیگنہ کش و حق ناشناس ہیں
مانا کہ تم بشر نہیں خورشید و ماہ ہو

Are they the murderers of the innocent and also
ungrateful ?
Admitted that you are not a human being,
but the Sun and Moon!

جب میکہ چوٹا تو پھر اب کیا جگہ کی قید
مسجد ہو، مدرسہ ہو، کوئی خانقاہ ہو

On leaving the tavern, what restriction is
there ?
It may be a mosque, or a school, or a Khankah.

سنتے ہیں جو بہشت کی تعریف سب درست
لیکن خدا کرے وہ تری جلوہ گاہ ہو

All that we hear in praise of Paradise is
correct ;

Would that it were thy abode of splendour !

ہمارے ذہن میں اس فکر کا ہے نام وصال
کہ گونہ ہو تو کہاں جائیں ہو تو کیونکر ہو

In our mind the name of this thought is
Union—

That if it were not to be, where to go ? And
if it be, how should it be ?

الچہتے ہو تم اگر دیکھتے ہو ائینہ
جو تم سے شہر میں ہوں ایک دو تو کیونکر ہو

You come into conflict, if you see your image
in the mirror ;,

Should there be others like you (in the city),
how would it be ?

جسے نصیب ہو روز سیاہ میرا سا
وہ شخص دن نہ کہے رات کو تو کیونکر ہو

One who is destined to a dark day, just as I am—
If he does not call the day night, how would
it be?

وفا کیسی کہاں کا عشق جب سر پہوڑنا تھرا
تو پھر اے سنگدل تیرا ہی سنگ آستان کیوں ہو

What of Faith and Love when one is deter-
mined to break his head ?

Why then, O stone-hearted one ! should it be
only thy threshold stone ?

قفس میں مجھ سے رو داد چمن کہتے نہ تڑھدم
گری ہے جس پہ کل بجلی وہ میرا آشیاں کیوں ہو

O comrade ! Don't fear to give me an account
of the garden, while I am encaged !

How could it be my nest that was attacked by
lightning yesterday ?

یہ فتنہ آدمی کی خانہ ویرانی کو کیا کم ہے ؟
ہوئے تم دوست جس کے دشمن اس کا آسماں کیوں ہو

Is this mischief insufficient for the destruction
of man's abode ?

Why should the Sky be his foe, whose friend you
happen to be ?

رہئے اب ایسی جگہ چل کر جہاں کوئی نہ ہو
ہم سخن کوئی نہ ہو اور ہم زباں کوئی نہ ہو

Let's now move to, and reside in, a place where
there be none—

None to talk to us and none to understand !

بے درودیوار سا اک گھر بنایا چاہئے
کوئی ہمسایہ نہ ہو اور پاسباں کوئی نہ ہو

There should be a house built, without doors
and walls:
There should be neither a neighbour, nor a
warden!

پڑیے گر بیمار تو کوئی نہ ہو تیماردار
اور اگر مر جائیے تو نوحہ خواں کوئی نہ ہو

If we fall ill, there should be none to tend us
And if we die, there should be none to mourn !

ابر روتا ہے کہ بزم طرب آمادہ کرو
برق ہنستی ہے کہ فرصت کوئی دم ہے ہم کو

The cloud weeps—that the Assembly of pleasure
be organised :
Lightning laughs—that time is but a few
moments !

ہے سبزہ زار ہر درودیوار غم کد
جس کی بہاریہ ہو پھر اُس کی خزاں نہ پوچھے

Every door as well as wall has become
enmossed—
Whose spring is this, why ask about his autumn ?

تم ہو بس پھر تمہیں پندارِ خدائی کیوں ہے
تم خداوند ہی کہلاؤ خدا اور سہی

You are an idol, then why this pride of God-
ship?

Let the people call you Lord—Let God be
something else !

صد جلوہ روبرو ہے جو مژگاں اُٹھائیے
طاقت کہاں کہ دید کا احساں اُٹھائیے

A hundred lights are in front, if we open our
eyes;

Where is the strength to undergo the obligation
of sight ?

دیوار بارِ صنتِ مزدور سے ہے خم
اے خانماں خراب نہ احساں اُٹھائیے

The wall is bending owing to the burden of the
labourer's obligation;

O thou, with a desolate abode ! bear not the
same burden!

مسجد کے زیر سایہ خرابات چاہئیے
بہوں پاس آنکھہ قبلہ حاجات چاہئیے

In the shadow of the mosque, there should be
a tavern:

Close to the brow there should be an eye—
the Kaaba of needs !

مے سے غرض نشاط ہے کس روسیاء کو
اک گو نہ بیخودی مجھ دن رات چاہئیے

Who, the accursed, holds pleasure as the object
of wine ?

I just require a sort of forgetfulness, day and
night.

ہے رنگ لالہ و گل و نسریں جدا جدا
ہر رنگ میں بہار کا اثبات چاہئیے

The colour of the tulip, and the wild rose is
different in each case ;

In every colour should be proved the existence
of Spring.

خیال مرگ کب تسکین دل آزرہ کو بخشے
مرے دام تمنا میں ہے اک صید زبوں وہ بھی

How can the thought of death pacify the
troubled heart?

In my snare of desire, that even is a humble
victim!

بیداد وفا دیکھ کہ جاتی رہی آخر
ہر چند مری جان کو تھا ربط لبوں سے

Notice the cruelty of Faith : my soul has depart-
ed at last,

Although it had an old attachment to (my)
lips.

گھر میں تھا کیا کہ ترا غم اُسے غارت کرتا
وہ جو رکھتے تھے ہم اک حسرت تعمیر سوئے

What was in the house that thy grief could
have plundered ?

That abortive desire for building, we had, is
there!

لپٹنا پر نیاں میں شعلہ آتش کا آساں ہے
ولسے مشکل ہے حکمت دل میں سوز غم چھپانے کی

It is easier for the flame of fire to be wrapped
in silk,

But, to conceal the burning pain in the heart
is difficult indeed!

لقد کوب حوادث کا تحمل کر نہیں سکتی
میری طاقت کہ ضامن تھی بتوں کے ناز اُٹھانے کی

My strength, which boasted of bearing with the
whims and airs of Beauty,

Cannot endure the onslaughts of misfortune;
(Ah me!)

اُس شمع کی طرح سے جس کو کوئی بجھا دے
میں بھی جلے ہوؤں میں ہوں داغ ناتمامی

Like the candle, extinguished by someone,

I am also among the burnt—a scar of imperfec-
tion !

حالاتہ ہے یہ سیلی خارا سے لالہ رنگ
غافل کو میرے شیشہ پہ مے کا گمان ہے

While it is tulip-coloured, owing to the blow
of granite,
The neglectful one presumes my phial to be
wine.

بیٹھا ہے جو کہ سایہ دیوار یار میں
فرمانروائے کشور ہندوستان ہے

One who sits under the shadow of the
Sweatheart's wall,
Is the ruler of the realm of Hindustan.

عمر بھر کا تو نے پیمان وفا باندھا تو کیا
عمر کو بھی تو نہیں ہے پائداری ہائے ہائے

If you made a promise of faithfulness for all
your life—what of it ?
Even life has no stability—Alas ! Alas!

سرگشتگی میں عالم ہستی سے یاس ہے
تسکین کو دے نوید کہ مرنے کی اس ہے

In distraction, it is all disappointment from the
world of Existence;
Convey the happy news to Complacence that
there is hope of death !

لیتا نہیں مرے دل آوارہ کی خبر
اب تک وہ جانتا ہے کہ میرے ہی پاس ہے

She does not enquire after the condition of my
wandering heart ;
Till now she knows it is already with her.

ہے وہ غرور حسن سے بیدگانہ وفا
ہر چند اُس کے پاس دل حق شناس ہے

Owing to the pride of beauty, she is a stranger
to faith,
Although she possesses a right-judging heart.

گر خامشی سے فائدہ اخفائے حال ہے
خوش ہوں کہ میری بات سمجھنا محال ہے

If the advantage of silence is the concealment
of (one's) condition,
I am happy that it is not possible to under-
stand my speech.

ہستی کے مس فریب میں آجائیو اسد
عالم تمام حلقہ دام خیال ہے

O Asad ! Don't be deceived by life, (beware!)
The whole Universe is a loop of the snare of
thought.

تم اپنے شکوہ کی باتیں نہ کہو کہو کہے پوچھو
 حذر کرو مرے دل سے کہ اس میں آگ دبی ہے

Don't go deep in asking about the complaints
 against you—
 Be cautious, there lies fire buried in my heart!

جی جالے ذوق فنا کی ناتمامی پر نہ کیوں؟
 ہم نہیں جلتے نفس ہر چند آتش بار ہے

Should not the heart burn to see the imperfec-
 tion of the desire for mortality?
 We do not burn, although the breath is rain-
 ing fire.

مجھ سے مت کہ تو ہمیں کہتا تھا اپنی زندگی
 زندگی سے بھی مرا جی ان دنوں بیزار ہے

Say not to me, "You called me your life !"
 I am tired even of life these days. (Ah
 change!)

خزاں کیا فصل گل کہتے ہیں کس کو کوئی موسم ہو
 وہی ہم ہیں قفس ہے اور ماتم بال و پر کا ہے

No matter, it may be autumn, or, spring, or,
 any season,
 We are the same—the cage is there and the
 mourning for wings !

قطع کیجئے نہ تعلق ہم سے
کچھ نہیں ہے تو عداوت ہی سہی

Don't break off all connections with us!
If there be nothing else, let it be ill-will !

ہم بھی تسلیم کی خو ڈالیں گے
بے نیازی تری عادت ہی سہی

We shall also accustom ourselves to resignation—
Let independence be thy habit, (O dear one!)

ڈھونڈ رہے اس مغنی آتشِ نفس کو جی
جس کی صدا ہو جلتی برقِ فنا مجھے

My heart is in search of a musician, with a
fiery breath,
Whose voice should be to me the lustre of the
lightning of Mortality,

مستانہ طے کروں ہوں رہِ وادیِ خیال
تا باز گشت سے نہ رہے مدعا مجھے

Like a drunkard, I am traversing the passage
of the valley of thought,
So that I may never think of retracing my steps.

کرتا ہے بسکہ باغ میں تو بے حجابیاں
آنے لگی ہے نکھت گل سے حیا مجھے

Inasmuch as you walk about in the garden,
unveiled,
I now feel ashamed of the fragrance of the
flower!

رکھتا بہروں ہوں خرقہ و سجادہ رہن سے
مدت ہوئی ہے دعوت آب و ہوا کئے

I now go about to mortgage (my) patched-cloth
and prayer-carpet for wine ;
It is a long time since I have entertained the
wind and water (spring).

بے صرفہ ہی گزرتی ہے ہو گرچہ عمر خضر
حضرت بھی کل کہیں گے کہ ہم کیا کیا کئے

In futility passes life, even if it be that of
Khizr ;
His Holiness would also say to-morrow, "What
did we do ?"

ہاتھ دھو دل سے یہی گرمی گراندیشہ میں ہے
آبگینہ تندہی صہبا سے پگھلا جائے ہے

Give up the idea (of the safety) of the heart,
if such is the heat of thought;
The phial owing to the heat of wine is melting
away.

نسیہ و نقد دو عالم کی حقیقت معلوم
لے لیا مجھ سے مری ہمت عالی نے مجھے

The reality of the cash and credit of the two
worlds is well known ;
My exalted spirit purchased my own self
from me.

کثرت آرائی وحدت ہے پرستاری وہم
کر دیا کافران اصنام خیالی نے مجھے

To see plurality in unity is devotion to whim—
These imaginary idols have made me an infidel.

آگ رہا ہے درودیوار سے سبزہ غالب
ہم بیابان میں ہیں اور گھر میں بہار آئی ہے

O Ghalib ! verdure has sprung up from the
doors and walls;
We are in the desert and Spring has paid a
visit to our abode.

دل سے تری نگاہ جگر تک اتر گئی
دونوں کو اک اداس میں رضامند کر گئی

Thy glance has passed from the heart right into
the liver ;
The two have been pleased in one graceful
manner.

شق ہو گیا ہے سینہ خوشا لذت فراق
تکلیف پردہ دارمی زخم جگر گئی

(My) chest has been torn, blessed is the delight
of freedom!

The hardship of the concealment of the liver's
wound is no more !

وہ بادۂ شبانہ کی سرمستیاں کہاں ؟
اُٹھیے بس اب کہ لذت خواب سحر گئی

Oh, where are those moods of intoxication of
the nightly wine ?

Let's arise now, for the joy of the morning sleep
is gone.

اڑاتی پھرے ہے خاک مری کوئے یار میں
بارے اب اے ہوا ہوس بال و پر گئی

My dust is now flying in my Sweetheart's lane ;
At last, O Wind ! now the ambition to have
wings is gone.

فردا و دی کا تفرقہ یکبار مت گیا
کل تم گئے کہ ہم پہ قیامت گزر گئی

The difference between To-day and To-morrow
was effaced once for all ;
Yesterday you departed and over us passed
the storm of Resurrection.

تسکین کو ہم نہ روئیں جو ذوقِ نظرِ ملے
حورانِ خلد میں تری صورت مگر ملے

We would not weep for the consolation (of the
heart), if we attain the joy of vision;
(We pray) that thy appearance be found among
the Houris of Paradise !

اپنی گلی میں مجھکو نہ کر دفن بعدِ قتل
میرے پتہ سے خلق کو کیوں تیرا گھر ملے

Bury me not in thy lane after my death !
From my tomb, why should the people trace
thy abode ?

ساقی گری کی شرم کرو آج ورنہ ہم
ہر شب پیا ہی کرتے ہیں مے جس قدر ملے

Have regard for your Sakiship to-day, other-
wise, we
Every night drink—as much as we can obtain.

تم کو بھی ہم دکھائیں کہ مجنوں نے کیا کیا
فرصت کشاکشِ غم پنہاں سے گر ملے

We would show you also what Majnun had
done,
If we find freedom from the struggle of the
inner grief.

لازم نہیں کہ خضر کی ہم پیروی کریں
 مانا کہ ایک بزرگ ہمیں سفر ملے

It is not essential that we follow Khizr—

Admitted that we met an Elder as a fellow-
 traveller!

کوئی دن گر زندگانی اور ہے
 اپنے جی میں ہم نے ٹھانی اور ہے

If there is life for a few days more, perchance,
 In our heart, we have resolved—something else.

آتش دوزخ میں یہ گرمی کہاں؟
 سوز غمہائے نہانی اور ہے

Where is this heat in the fire of Hell ?

The burning of the inner pains is something
 different !

ہو چکیں غالب بلائیں سب تمام
 ایک مرگ ناکہانی اور ہے

O Ghalib ! All the calamities have ended ;
 An unexpected death is one more !

کوئی امید بر نہیں آتی
کوئی صورت نظر نہیں آتی

No hope is accomplished :

No chance of possibility one sees.

موت کا ایک دن صعبین سے
نیند کیوں رات بھر نہیں آتی

For death there is a day appointed ;

Why can't I sleep all the night ?

داغ دل گر نظر نہیں آتا
بو بھی اے چارہ گر نہیں آتی

If the scar of the heart cannot be seen,

O physician ! Don't you even get the odour ?

ہم وہاں ہیں جہاں سے ہم کو بھی
کچھ ہماری خبر نہیں آتی

We are whence even we—

Don't get any news of ourselves.

دل نادان تجھے ہوا کیا ہے ؟
آخر اس درد کی دوا کیا ہے ؟

O simple heart! What has happened to thee ?
What is the remedy for this pain, tell me ?

جبکہ تجھے بن نہیں کوئی موجود
پھر یہ ہڈگامہ اے خدا کیا ہے ؟

If there is nothing existent but Thee,
Then what is all this tumult ? O God !

یہ پری چہرہ لوگ کیسے ہیں
غمزہ و عشوہ و ادا کیا ہے ؟

Who are these fairy-faced people ?
What—coquetry, blandishment and grace ?

سبزہ و گل کہاں سے آئے ہیں
ابر کیا چیز ہے ہوا کیا ہے ؟

Whence come the flower and the grass ?
What are clouds ? What is wind ?

ہم کو ان سے وفا کی ہے امید
جو نہیں جانتے وفا کیا ہے ؟

We expect faith from *those*
Who know not what faith is !

ہوں کشمکش نزع میں ہاں جذب محبت
کچھ کہ نہ سکوں پر وہ مرے پوچھنے کو آئے

I am struggling with life (last breath), O
Attraction of Love !
Although I may say nothing—come she must to
enquire after me!

ہاں اہل طلب کون سنے طعنہ نایافت
دیکھا کہ وہ ملتا نہیں اپنے ہی کو کھو آئے

Yea, O men of quest! Who should hear the
taunt of failure ?
Seeing that He is not to be found, we lost
ourselves therefore.

کی ہم نفسوں نے اثر گریہ میں تقریر
اچھے رہے آپ اس سے مگر مجھکو ڈبو آئے

My associates discussed the effect of lamenta-
tion ;
They fared better, but drowned me therein.

کہاں تک روؤں اُس کے خیمہ کے پیچھے قیامت ہے
 صری قسمت میں یا رب کیا نہ تھی دیوار پتھر کی

How long shall I weep behind her camp ? Woe
 is me !

O God ! Was there no wall of stone to be part
 of my fate ?

پنہاں تھا دام سخت قریب اَشیان کے
 اُچانے نہ پائے تھے کلا گرفتار ہم ہوئے

Close to the nest lay hidden strong snares ;
 We had not yet attempted to fly when we were
 caught.

اے تازہ واردان بساط ہوائے دل !
 زنہار اگر تمہیں ہوس نائے ونوش ہے

O new-comers to the carpet of the longing of
 the heart!
 Beware, if you have the desire for drink and
 music !

دیکھو مجھے جو دیدۂ عبرت نگاہ ہو
 میری سنو جو گوش نصیحت نبوش ہے

See me, if you have to take a warning !
 Hear my word, if you have the ear to take
 advice !

ساقی بجلوہ دشمن ایمان و اکہی
مطرب بہ نغمہ رھزن تمکین و ہوش ہے

The Saki in splendour—the enemy of Faith and
Cognisance:

The musician with song—the robber of Balance
and Sense!

یا شب کو دیکھتے تھے کہ ہر گوشہ بساط
دامان باغبان و کف گل فروش ہے

It was—that we saw at night every corner of
the carpet—

The skirt of the gardener and the palm of
the flower-seller.

لطف خرام ساقی و ذوق صدائے چنگ
یہ جنس نگاہ وہ فردوس گوش ہے

The joy of the gait of the Saki and the rapture
of the cry of the lute :

This—the Paradise of Vision and that—the
Firdaus of the Ear !

یا صبحدم جو دیکھئے آ کر تو بزم میں
نے وہ سرور و سوز نہ جوش و خروش ہے

And now, on coming early in the morning,
we would see in the Assembly,

Neither that joy and rejoicing, nor that tumult
and cry.

داغ فراق صحبت شب کی جلی ہوئی
اک شمع رہ گئی ہے سو وہ بھی خاموش ہے

Burnt by the scar of separation of last night's
gathering,
There remains a candle, and that even is dead !

نفس قیس کہ ہے چشم و چراغ صحرا
گر نہیں شمع سیہ خانہ لیلی نہ سہی

The breath of Qais which is the eye and
candle of the Sahara—
If there is not a candle in the dark abode of
Leila, let it not be !

ایک ہنگامہ پہ موقوف ہے گھر کی رونق
نوحہ غم ہی سہی نغمہ شادی نہ سہی

On tumult depends the flourishing state of the
house ;
Let it be a dirge, if not a song of rejoicing !

جلا ہے جسم جہاں دل بھی جل گیا ہوگا
کریڈے ہو جو اب راکھ جستجو کیا ہے

Where the body has been burnt, the heart also
must have been burnt;
You are raking the ashes now—what are you
looking for ?

وہ چیز جس کے لئے ہم کو ہو بہشت عزیز
سوائے بادۂ گل فام مشکبو کیا ہے

That thing for which we may hold Paradise
dear—
Except the rose-coloured musky wine—what
could it be ?

ہوڑا ہے شہ کا مصاحب پھرے ہے اتراتا
وگرنہ شہر میں غالب کی آبرو کیا ہے

He has become the companion of the King and
struts about proudly ;
Otherwise, in the city, what is the prestige of
Ghalib ?

اُ کہ مری جان کو قرار نہیں ہے
طاقت بیداد انتظار نہیں ہے

Come, for, my soul has no rest, pray, come !
There is no power of endurance and patience
to await I

ہجوم غم سے یاں تک سرنگونی مجھ کو حاصل ہے
کہ تار دامن و تار نظر میں فرق مشکل ہے

Due to the pressure of grief, my head is
drooping so low,
That between the thread of the skirt and the
thread of sight, it is hard to distinguish.

حسن مہ گرچہ بہ ہنگام کمال اچھا ہے
 اُس سے میرا مہ خورشید جمال اچھا ہے

Although the beauty of the moon, at the time
 of perfection, is lovely,
 Better than that is my Moon, the sun-faced
 beauty!

بوسہ دیتے نہیں اور دل پہ ہے ہر لحظہ نگاہ
 جی میں کہتے ہیں کہ مفید آئے تو مال اچھا ہے

She does not give me a kiss but keeps an eye
 on (my) heart ;
 She thinks that if she gets it for nothing, it
 would be good.

اور بازار سے لے آئے اگر ٹوٹ گیا
 ساغر جم سے مرا جام سفال اچھا ہے

Another may be brought from the bazaar, if it
 breaks—
 Better than the Cup of Jamshid is my clay
 goblet !

اُن کے دیکھے سے جو آ جاتی ہے منہ پر رونق
 وہ سمجھتے ہیں کہ بیمار کا حال اچھا ہے

At her sight there passes a wave of lustre over
 the face ;
 She thinks that the patient's condition is good.

ہم سخن تیشہ نے فرہاد کو شیریں سے کیا
جس طرح کا کہ کسی میں ہو کمال اچھا ہے

The adze enabled Farhad to talk to Shirin—
Whatever talent one has, is good !

قطرہ دریا میں جو مل جائے تو دریا ہو جائے
کام اچھا ہے وہ جس کا کہ مآل اچھا ہے

If the drop embraces the river, it becomes a
river ;

The action is good, if its end is good.

ہم کو معلوم ہے جنت کی حقیقت لیکن
دل کے خوش رکھنے کو غالب یہ خیال اچھا ہے

We know full well the reality of Paradise, but,
Ghalib ! It is a good thought to please one's
heart!

عشق نے غالب تکما کر دیا
ورنہ ہم بھی آدمی تھے کام کے

Only love has disabled us, Ghalib !
Otherwise, we were also men of worth.

یہ اس انداز سے بہار آئی
کہ ہوئے مہر و مہ تماشاوی

Again, in such away, the Spring has come,
That the sun and the moon have become
spectators.

دیکھو! اے ساکنان خطاۃ خاکی!
اس کو کہتے ہیں عالم آرائی

Behold, O inhabitants of the Earth !
This is what they call world-adorning :

کہ زمیں ہو گئی ہے سر تا سر
روکش سطم چرخ مینائی

That the Earth has appeared from one end to
the other,
Face to face with the dome of the jewelled sky.

سبزہ و گل کے دیکھنے کے لئے
چشم نرگس کو دی ہے بینائی

For the grass and the flower, in order to see,
The eye of the narcissus has been given sight.

ہوں زخود رفتہ بیدائے خیال
 بھول جانا ہے نشانی میری

I have transgressed my own self in the desert
 of thought;

Oblivion alone, O wayfarers ! is my relic now!

قدر سنگ سر رہ رکھتا ہوں
 سخت ارزاں ہے گرانی میری

My value is equal to the stone on the wayside;
 My preciousness is very cheap, (Ah me !)

گرد باد رہ بیتابی ہوں
 صرصر شوق ہے بانی میری

I am the whirlwind of the way of agitation ;
 The violent wind of desire is my founder.

دہن اس کا جو نہ معلوم ہوا
 کھل گئی ہیچمدانی میری

As her mouth could not be discovered,
 My ignorance came to light.

جس زخم کی ہو سکتی ہو تدبیر رفو کی
لکھ دیجیو یا رب اُسے قسمت میں عدو کی

The wound which can be successfully darned—
O God ! write it in the fate of (my) foe !

اچھا ہے سرانگشت حنائی کا تصور
دل میں نظر آتی تو ہے اک بوند لہر کی

The conception of the tip of the hennaed finger
is good;
At least one can see a drop of blood in the heart.

آغوش گل کشودہ برائے وداع ہے
اے عندلیب چل کہ چلے دن بہار کے

The bosom of the flower is open for parting ;
O Nightingale! Let's depart, for the days of
Spring are going!

ہے وصل ہجر عالم تمکین و ضبط میں
معشوق شوخ و عاشق دیوانہ چاہئے

Union is separation in an atmosphere of gravity
and restraint;
The sweetheart should be playful and the lover
passionate.

منحصر مرنے پہ ہو جس کی اُمید
نا اُمیدی اُسکی دیکھا چاہئے

On dying, whose hope relies—

How obvious is his hopelessness !

ہر قدم دوری منزل ہے نمایاں مجھ سے
میری رفتار سے بھاگے ہیں بیاہاں مجھ سے

At every step, the distance of the goal from me
increases :

At my speed the desert is running away from me.

وحشتِ آتشِ دل سے شب تنہائی میں
صورتِ دود رہا سایہ گریزاں مجھ سے

On account of the wildness of the fire of the
heart, in the aloofness of night,

Like smoke, the shadow kept flying from me.

موت کی راہ نہ دیکھوں کہ بن ائے نہ رہے
تم کو چاہوں کہ نہ آؤ تو بلائے نہ بنے

Should I not await death, which is sure to
come ?

Should I love you—in case you don't come,
calling is of no avail—?

وہ آکے خواب میں تسکین اضطراب تو دے
ولے مجھے تپش دل مجال خواب تو دے

She would appear in a dream and pacify my
restless heart,

But, let the agitation of my heart allow me to
sleep !

ابھی آتی ہے بوبالش سے آپسی زلف مشکیں کی
ہماری دید کو خواب زلیخا عار بستر ہے

The pillow still gives out the fragrance of her
musky locks ;

For our vision, the dream of Zuleikha is a
shame for the bed!

ہر چند ہر ایک شے میں تو ہے
پر تجھ سے تو کوئی شے نہیں ہے

Although in every thing Thou art—
But—there is nothing like Thee.

ہاں کھائیو مت فریب ہستی
ہر چند کہیں کہ ہے نہیں ہے

Yea, be not deceived by Existence !

Although they might say, "It is," it is not!

شادی سے گزر کہ غم نہ ہووے
 آردی جو نہ ہو تو دے نہیں ہے

Desist from pleasure, so that there be no pain !
 If there is no Spring, Autumn there would never
 be!

نہ پوچھہ نسخۂ مرہم جراحہ دل کا
 کہ اس میں ریزۂ الماس جزو اعظم ہے

Ask me not to disclose the prescription of the
 ointment for the wounded heart;
 For, in it a particle of diamond is the major
 ingredient.

بہت دنوں میں تغافل نے تیرے پیدا کی
 وہ اک نگہ کہ بظاہر نگاہ سے کم ہے

In many days thy inattention was able to
 produce—
 That one look—which is ostensibly less than a
 look.

کرے ہے بادہ ترے لب سے کسب رنگ فروغ
 خط پیالہ سراسر نگاہ گلچیں ہے

Wine is acquiring from thy lips a lustrous
 colour;
 The line of the cup is wholly the vision of the
 flower-gatherer.

اسد ھے نزع میں چل بے وفا برائے خدا
مقام ترک حجاب و رداغ تمکین ھے

Asad is on the verge of death, O faithless
one ! let's see him; for God's sake—
It is time to give up the veil and bid farewell
to Dignity!

مرے مرے دیکھنے کی آرزو رہ جائیگی
وائے ناکامی کہ اس کافر کا خنجر تیز ھے

While dying, there would remain a desire un-
fulfilled—
Oh, ill-success! That infidel's dagger is so
sharp.

میرے غم خانے کی قسمت جب رقم ہونے لگی
لکھ دیا منجملہ اسباب ویرانی مجھے

When the fate of my dark abode was being
written,
I was put down as one of its causes of desolation.

وائے واں بھی شور محشر نے نہ دم لیئے دیا
لے گیا تھا گور میں ذوق تن آسانی مجھے

Alas! There even the tumult of Resurrection
allowed me no rest;
To the grave had taken me my longing for
restfulness.

قد وکیسو میں قیس و کرھکن کی آزمائش ہے
جہاں ہم ہیں وہاں دارورسن کی آزمائش ہے

In the attraction of stature and curly hair is the
trial of Qais and Kohkan ;

Where we are—there is the trial of the scaffold
and string !

سنہانے دے مجھے اے نا آمیدی کیا قیامت ہے
کہ دامن خیال یار چھوٹا جائے ہے مجھ سے

Let me recover myself, O Despair ! What a
calamity !

Even the skirt of my Friend's thought is slipping
out of my hands.

ہوئے ہیں پاؤں ہی پہاے نبرد عشق میں زخمی
نہ بھاگا جائے ہے مجھ سے نہ ٹھہرا جائے ہے مجھ سے

My feet have been wounded, at the very outset,
in the battle of love :

I can neither run, nor can I stay, Oh, dear me !

بازیچہ اطفال ہے دنیا مرے آگے
ہوتا ہے شب و روز تماشا مرے آگے

The world is only children's play before me—
It is a drama performed, day and night before
me.

اک کھیل ہے اورنگ سلیمان مرے نزدیک
اک بات ہے اعجاز مسیحا مرے آگے

The throne of Solomon is just a trifle before me :
The miracle of Messiah is just a fable before me.

جز نام نہیں صورت عالم مجھے منظور
جز وہم نہیں ہستی اشیا مرے آگے

Except in name, I do not recognize the existence
of the Universe;
The reality of things is nothing but a whim
before me.

ہوتا ہے نہاں گرد میں صحرا مرے ہوتے
گھستا ہے جیسے خاک پہ دریا مرے آگے

The Sahara conceals itself in dust in my
presence;
The river rubs its forehead on the dust before
me.

پھر دیکھئے انداز گل افشانی گفتار
رکھہ دے کوئی پیمانہ و صہا مرے آگے

See then the mode of (my) delivering a flowery
speech !
Let someone place a cup of wine before me !

نفرت کا گماں گزرے ہے میں رشک سے گزرا
کیونکر کہوں لو نام نہ آن کا مرے آگے

It smells of hate—I forego envy—

How should I say, "Don't refer to her by
name ! " ?

ایمان مجھے روکے ہے جو کھینچے ہے مجھے کفر
کعبہ مرے پیچھے ہے کلیسا مرے آگے

Faith is checking me, while Infidelity is pulling
me :

The Kaaba is behind, the Ecclesia before me.

خوش ہوتے ہیں یروصل میں یوں مرنے نہیں جاتے
آئی شب ہجراں کی تمنا مرے آگے

They rejoice, but do not thus die at the time of
meeting—

The longing of the night of separation came to
pass before me.

گو ہاتھ کو جنبش نہیں آنکھوں میں تو دم ہے
رہنے دو ابھی ساغر و مینا مرے آگے

Although my hand moves not, still there is
light in my eyes;

Let there be still the cup and the carafe before
me!

نہیں بہار کو فرصت نہ ہو بہار تو ہے
طراوت چمن و خوبی ہوا کہئے

If the Spring has no time, let it not, it is Spring
after all;
Notice the freshness of the garden and purity of
the air !

جب تک دہان زخم نہ پیدا کرے کوئی
مشکل کہ تجھ سے راہ سخن وا کرے کوئی

So long as one does not create the mouth of a
wound,
It is difficult, indeed, to open the way of speech
with thee.

کیا کیا خضر نے سکندر سے
اب کسے رہنما کرے کوئی

How did Khizr treat poor Alexander ?
Now, whom should one take as a guide ?

نکلنا خلد سے آدم کا سنتے آئے ہیں لیکن
بہت بے ابرو ہو کر ترے کوچہ سے ہم نکلے

We have been hearing about the expulsion of
Adam from Paradise,
But, bereft of all dignity, we came out of thy lane.

ہوں میں بھی تماشا ئی نیرنگ تما
مطلب نہیں کچھ اس سے کہ مطلب ہی بر آورے

I am also a spectator of the incantation of
desire ;

I have no such object that the object be surely
fulfilled.

چھڑکے ہے شبنم آئینہ برگ گل پر آب
اے عندلیب وقت وداع بہار ہے

Dew is sprinkling water on the mirror of the
rose petal;

O Nightingale! It is the time for the departure
of Spring !

بے پردہ سوئے وادی مجنوں گزر نہ کر
ہر ذرہ کے نقاب میں دل بیقرار ہے

Move not to the valley of Majnun without thy
veil;

Every particle has under its cover a restless
heart!

شعلے سے نہ ہوتی ہوس شعلہ نے جو کی
جی کس قدر افسردگی دل پہ جلا ہے

The flame could not have done what the long-
ing for the flame has done—

How the mind has burnt over the frigidity of
the heart!

مجبوری و دعوائے گرفتاری آفت
دست تہ سنگ آمدہ پیمان وفا ہے

Under compulsion—and the boast of being
captivated by love ;
The promise of faith is a hand, pressed under
stone!

بیگانگی خلق سے بے دل نہ ہو غالب
کوئی نہیں تیرا تو مری جان خدا ہے

On account of the strangeness of people,, don't
lose heart, O Ghalib !
If there is none thine, my soul! there is God.

واعظ نہ تم پیو نہ کسی کو پلا سکو
کیا بات ہے تمہاری شراب طہور کی

Moralist! Neither can you drink, nor offer
it to anyone;
How wonderful is your pure (holy) wine !

لوتا ہے مجھ سے حشر میں قاتل کہ کیوں اٹھا
گویا ابھی سنی نہیں آواز صور کی

The Assassin quarrels with me on the Day of
Resurrection as to why I have risen,
As if the call of the trumpet of Israfil has not
yet been heard !

کیا فرض ہے کہ سب کو ملے ایک سا جواب
اؤ نہ ہم بھی سیر کریں کوہ طور کی

It is not essential that every one should get the
same reply;
Let's also pay a visit to Mount Sinai!

نے تیر کماں میں ہے نہ صیاد کہیں میں
گوشے میں قفس کے مجھے آرام بہت ہے

Neither the arrow is in the bow, nor does the
hunter lie in ambush;
In the corner of the cage, I am in great
comfort!

خوں ہو کے جگر آنکھ سے ٹپکا نہیں اے مرگ
رہنے دو مجھے یاں کہ ابھی کام بہت ہے

The liver has not turned into blood and dripped
from the eye, O Death !
Let me remain here, for, much have I yet to do !

مدت ہوئی ہے یار کو مہماں کئے ہوئے
جوش قدح سے بزم چراغاں کئے ہوئے

It is a long time since we entertained our
Friend as a guest,
And illuminated the Assembly with the sparkl-
ing wine of the cup.

کرتا ہوں جمع پھر جگر لخت لخت کو
عرصہ ہوا ہے دعوت مڑکاں کٹے ہوئے

I am again gathering the scattered pieces of my
liver;
It is a long time since the eyelashes have been
given a banquet.

پھر وضع احتیاط سے رکنے لگا ہے دم
برسوں ہوئے ہیں چاک گریباں کٹے ہوئے

Again, I feel suffocated on account of my
code of caution;
It is years since I have rent my garment
asunder.

باہمدگر ہوئے ہیں دل و دیدہ پھر رقیب
نظارہ و خیال کا ساماں کٹے ہوئے

Again, the heart and the eye have become rivals
to each other
Having arranged a feast for vision and thought.

دل پھر طواف کوئے ملاست کر جائے ہے
پندار کا صنم کدہ ویراں کٹے ہوئے

Again, the heart is going to make the circuit of
the lane of reproof,
Having laid waste the idol-house of pride.

یہر شوق کر رہا ہے خریدار کی طلب
عرض متاع عقل و دل و جاں کئے ہوئے

Again, Desire is demanding a purchaser—
Presenting forth the valuables of Reason, Heart
and Soul.

دوڑے ہے یہر ہر ایک گل و لالہ پر خیال
صد گلستاں نگاہ کا سماں کئے ہوئے

Again, Thought is flitting over every rose and
tulip,
Having had a hundred gardens as the property
of vision.

یہر چاہتا ہوں نامہ دلدار کھولنا
جاں نذر دلفریبی عنوان کئے ہوئے

Again, I desire to open the letter of my beloved,
Having sacrificed my soul to the charm of its
heading.

مانگے ہے یہر کسی کو لب بام پر ہوس
زلف سیاہ رخ پہ پریشاں کئے ہوئے

Desire again demands someone on the edge of
the roof—
Having her black locks scattered over her face.

اک نو بہار ناز کو تاکے ہے پھر نکاہ
چہرہ فروغ سے سے گلستاں کئے ہوئے

Again, Vision is staring at a "new-spring of
elegance"—

Having turned her face into a rose-garden with
the lustre of wine.

پھر جی میں ہے کہ در پہ کسی کے پڑے رہیں
سر زیر بار منت درباں کئے ہوئے

Again, I am of a mind that I should keep lying
at her threshold,

Having my head put under the obligation of
the *darban*.

جی تہ ہوندتا ہے پھر وہی فرصت کے رات دن
بیٹھے رہیں تصور جاناں کئے ہوئے

The mind is looking for the same old nights
and days of leisure—

To continue sitting in the blissful imagination
of the Sweetheart !

نوید امن ہے بیداد دوست جاں کے لئے
رہی نہ طرز ستم کوئی آسماں کے لئے

Good news of peace to the soul is the Friend's
injustice !

There is no manner of tyranny left for the Sky.

وہ زندہ ہم ہیں کہ ہیں روشناس خلق اے خضر!
 نہ تم کہ چور بنے عمر جاوداں کے لئے

Among the living are we, acquainted with God's
 people, O Khizr !
 And not you who became a thief for a life of
 eternity !

مثال یہ مری کوشش کی ہے کہ مرغ اسیر
 کرے قفس میں فراہم خس اشیاء کے لئے

The instance of my effort is that of a captive
 bird
 That collects straws in its cage to build a nest.

گدا سمجھ گئے وہ چپ تھا مری جو شامست آئے
 اٹھا اور اٹھ کے قدم میں نے پاسباں کے لئے

Taking me for a beggar, he was quiet, but as
 ill-luck would have it,
 I got up and flung myself at the gate-keeper's
 feet.

ان کو کیا علم کہ کشتی پہ مری کیا گزری
 دوست جو ساتھ مرے تالاب ساحل آئے

What do they know as to what befell my boat—
 Friends who accompanied me only to the
 river bank ?

سامنا حور و پری نے نہ کیا ہے نہ کریں گے
عکس تیرا ہی مگر تیرے مقابل آئے

The Houris and fairies have neither faced Thee,
nor will they;
Thy own reflection might come in front of Thee.

THE END

